

LONDON THE READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

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[REGISTERED FOR TRANSMISSION ABROAD.]

No. 321.—VOL. XIII.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING JUNE 26, 1869.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



[THE SPY.]

AFTER THREE YEARS.

BY THE

Author of "The Golden Apple," "Aspasia," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XX.

LYLE HALL kept its guests a week longer, although it could hardly be said that it was a very brilliant or merry circle. A cold shadow seemed to rest upon them all, even when they essayed to be most gay and cheery. Perhaps two ought to be excepted. Miss Barbara could not help being a little disturbed by the suspected uneasiness of mind in her best friends, but it was not in her nature to be downhearted or disconsolate long; and the Count Lubin certainly appeared as if there was no shadow, however faint, in his sky, not the slightest alarm, doubt, or fear in his heart.

The host was perhaps less variable in his conduct than the Lloyds, or the Cartwrights. He was uniformly grave, quiet, sad; but always courteous and ready to forward in any way possible, the general harmony and enjoyment.

Hester Lloyd had left off watching him; no longer in her secret heart condemned him. Her warm, impassioned nature was stirred now by other and more intense emotion. She was too keen-eyed and sensitive-spirited not to see the change in her father, not to connect it with the secret influence of the cool, and nonchalant, and voluble count. At one moment she loathed him with a wild intensity of abhorrence, and at another all her fierce pride flamed up in the deadliest anger; but there were still other times when her very heart seemed to die within her beneath a cold and dreadful terror. She watched her father with a secret but painfully acute solicitude, and hardly dared to acknowledge to herself all she read and detected of his subservience to this odious man.

At first, with all her haughty imperiousness, she set herself to defy and defeat him.

She went down one morning, a little earlier than usual, and found Count Lubin the sole occupant of the little breakfast parlour.

He turned with one of his brilliant smiles. "Good morning! Miss Lloyd. Now indeed Aurora has risen! I need not ask if you are well—that rich rose upon your cheek answers me. I thought last evening, that you could never look so superbly beautiful again, but you show me the same miracle this morning. I have heard how some fortunate people receive at birth a fairy spell; Venus herself must have sent yours.

Hester Lloyd's red lip curled. "Don't waste idle compliments or idle speeches upon me, Count Lubin. I assure you they are worse than lost."

"That cannot be in this case," replied the imperturbable count; "nothing is lost that comes from an earnest and sincere heart. Perhaps Miss Lloyd is too well used to a conqueror's triumphant way, to give heed to the acquisition of a new devotee. Perhaps she has not cared to question concerning the impression she has made upon her humble servant?"

Hester had passed to the window, and stood there looking forth listlessly, and drumming with her fair fingers on the glass. She turned at this, swept him a mocking courtesy, and answered defiantly:

"You are right there; I have not cared."

"Let it be my sweet task to teach you," cried the count, putting himself into a rather tragical attitude, and clasping his supple hands in the approved style.

Nothing could have seemed colder or more scornful than the smile which flashed across her beautiful face, and lingered mockingly in those wonderful eyes, but she kept silence.

His sallow cheek flushed a little angrily.

"Stranger things have happened," he said; "the fairest and haughtiest yield at last."

"When they meet their sovereign, or are conquered by their foe. Neither case is mine," returned Miss Lloyd.

"You allude to the past, or the present, possibly. I am thinking of a speedy future," responded the count, significantly. "Miss Lloyd cannot surely blame an ardent lover for refusing to accept defeat. One who comes, besides, endorsed by a father's confidence and blessing. Sweet lady, those bright eyes

shall put away their scorn, those lovely lips learn to give me welcome."

"Intolerable impertinence!" ejaculated Hester Lloyd, blazing upon him in a very passion of indignation. "This is unpardonable. I will ask my father to send you away, or to take me home at once."

The count laughed. How the triumphant irony of the musical tones stung and maddened her!

"I recommend you to try the experiment, beautiful sceptic. Be sure that you lay commands upon your father to send me away."

She was trembling from head to foot with anger, and crossed the room hastily, and laid her hand upon the silver knob of the door, intending to sweep away in a queenly scorn that would not condescend to give him another word, but at the very threshold she encountered her father.

She caught at him with both hands, and tried to draw him away from view. Uselessly, for the count called out hastily:

"Good morning, Mr. Lloyd. Come in, please. I have a word to say to you."

"Papa, papa, come with me rather!" implored his daughter, in a stifled voice.

Mr. Lloyd glanced from one to the other, dubiously.

Hester's cheeks were crimson, her eyes flashed, her hands shook. The count stood there in the doorway calm, smiling, tranquil, but with a certain look in his eyes, which the wretched merchant had learned to interpret too thoroughly.

"In a moment, my dear; let me see what the count wishes," stammered Lawrence Lloyd.

Her hands fell away from his arm, and her face bore a bitterly reproachful glance.

"Shall he have precedence, papa? Go then."

She turned falteringly.

"Stay, fair lady, I beseech you. It would be like Hamlet without the Danish prince, if you should take leave. Pray bring your daughter in, Mr. Lloyd."

The proud girl was standing like one stricken suddenly helpless. She did not resist, she seemed to have lost the power, when her father took her hand and drew her into the room.

"Your cruel daughter tells me, sir, that you will send me away," continued the count, losing nothing of the blandness of his tone; "send me away, because I ventured to speak out of the depths of my heart, a hint of my admiration and devotion for her lovely self. Of course, I am in a panic of desperate alarm. Spare me suspense, I pray you, and let me have your verdict."

Could the strained, excited senses of the daughter fail to take in the mocking defiance, the conscious security of the light tones?

She turned her eyes appealingly upon her father, feeling as if she could have fallen and kissed the very dust under his feet, had he turned upon the insolent speaker with the old stateliness and dignity of manner, of which she had been so proud.

Alas, alas! Lawrence Lloyd flushed, and turned pale, took a step forward, and twisted his fingers together nervously, and then said feebly, in a husky voice:

"I am sure, count, you have mistaken Hester's meaning, or else she was jesting with you. Why should I send you away from my own house, much less from Lord Cuthbert Lyle's?"

"Why, indeed; that is what I wished to impress upon Miss Lloyd. She will not understand that the bright and beautiful hopes I cherish, have received your fatherly sanction. Be good enough to tell her so."

Oh! the insolence of the tone! Hester Lloyd's hands rested one upon the other, and in such a fierce grip, that there were white ridges swelling under the close-pressing fingers. She looked once more in her father's face. His eyes were dropped in confusion, or surely he could not have resisted that piteous appeal.

Lower and lower sank her heart, keeping company with the drooping head, for she knew what was coming—that downcast countenance betrayed it.

"I must confess, count, that it will be a great relief and pleasure to me, if my daughter will listen favourably to your suit," said the merchant, slowly, the words coming in thick, hesitating tones.

"You hear, Miss Lloyd," said the count.

"I hear," returned she, fiercely. "You have gained my father's good will by some evil machination, or have compelled his obedience by some abuse of wicked power, but it is another thing, quite another thing, to win Hester Lloyd herself!"

As she said it, she fled out of the room with swift, blind steps, and at the outer verandah door almost stumbled over Lord Cuthbert, who was coming in from the gardens.

"Miss Lloyd—you are ill—or in trouble!" exclaimed his lordship, in a voice full of unfeigned solicitude. "You are very pale. Were you going to the air? Let me lend you my assistance."

She could not find a word to say, until he had taken her out to the arbour. He placed her gently on the seat, and then, with the delicacy of true refinement, turned away where he could be of assistance if needed, but left her secure from his observation.

She came to him in a few moments, with a proud, sad smile, and a new quiet dignity of manner.

"Thank you for your kindness. I am better now. I will go back to the house," she said, simply.

"I hope you have not exerted yourself too much of late?" he began, but she checked him, promptly.

"No, it is nothing of that sort. I don't wish to deceive you. It is only that my turn has come for knowing something of sorrow and trouble, and I have been blind and wilful, and self-sufficient so long, that I cannot bear anything patiently."

Bitter pain, sore humiliation blended in the tone.

Lord Cuthbert opened his eyes. Was it the proud, imperious Miss Lloyd?

Yet it was far from his thoughts to feel any momentary triumph.

"You, too?" he murmured, sorrowfully. "I had hoped you were always to be exempt."

"I am afraid I have counted for it also," returned she. "Perhaps it is a much needed lesson, to teach me to be ashamed of my harsh judgments, my Pharisaical exclusiveness."

His sigh echoed here.

"I—who have drawn away my garments lest they should catch a speck from the common dust; who have said to my fellow creatures, 'stand aside that I may go up the higher.' Perhaps it is right that I should be compelled to hang my head in humiliation," she went on, with increasing bitterness, but stopped short, catching his puzzled, perplexed glance, and blushed hotly, and then added, hastily: "I think I am losing my senses here. I don't wonder you are questioning my sanity."

"Miss Lloyd, you will not need my assurance of rendering you any assistance in my power. You know already that I shall count it a happy thing to make any sacrifice, to be of the slightest service to you," he ventured.

She was not ready for this—the proud nature had only for a moment wavered. She flung out a deprecating hand.

"Nay, I am not yet so desperate!" she cried, hastily. "My troubles have not yet assumed tangible form. You see how absurd I am; I am making this tragical bemoaning over the shadows only. Ah, there is the breakfast bell! It is not often I take the air of the garden before it sounds. It gives me new vigour, and like the first beams of morning, disperses all ghostly shadows. Why did I seem so melancholy? I will recall my courage, and face the spectres, and drive them away—I will!"

Her melancholy eye flashed again, the colour came back to her face, her step was firm and resolute. At the breakfast table she surprised Lord Cuthbert by her cheerful talk, and unembarrassed smile. The count watched her furtively, and congratulated himself that she had resigned herself to the situation.

Laurence Lloyd knew her better, and dreaded exceedingly his next *ilite-à-tête*, and struggled to escape, when she put her hand coaxingly upon his arm, and sought to entice him into the gardens.

"Not now, dear Hester, I have promised Lord Cuthbert to take a look at the new horse. Another time, love."

"Nay, but, papa, it is only for a moment."

He saw the uselessness of resistance, and yielded silently.

She spoke low, clear, and firmly, the moment they were safe from listeners.

"Papa, I want to return home. I think it is right that I should go. Will you be good enough to go with me to-morrow?"

"Dear child, you are so vehement, and headstrong—I am afraid, as well. How will it look for us to take such abrupt leave?"

"No one will be surprised. I have been talking about a sudden departure ever since I have been here. No one will make the slightest remark, except—this Count Lubin, and he dares to tell me I shall not go at all."

Her eye flashed and her lip curled again in bitter scorn.

Lawrence Lloyd was silent.

A cold, gray shadow fell upon her face. All her recent ardour and hopefulness dropped away from her, and the vague terror, the wild suspicions, the sorrowful doubts returned.

"Father, father, you have not answered me. Speak; tell me if this man's dastardly will is of more account than your daughter's happiness and high honour?" she demanded, presently.

Lawrence Lloyd dashed his hand across his forehead fiercely, and answered in a voice of keenest anguish:

"Hester, Hester, doubt everything except your father's love. Do you not know that all the rest of the world is nothing to me in comparison with your happiness? that I fling down my life willingly, joyously, to secure your safety?"

"What spell, then, does he use to change you so?" she asked, even while she nestled in his arms in the old, fond fashion. "Oh, my father, this man is terrible to me!"

She felt his shudder respond to his own.

"You will learn to forget this girlish distaste. You will find that he is admired and esteemed in London. It is the best way. My treasure, my darling, my heart's idol, yield cheerfully. And after all, think how many will envy you such a settlement. Is it nothing to be a countess?"

"Nothing!" echoed Hester; "it is to me unutterable misery, overpowering shame, boundless humiliation."

"Let me put it another way," he said, caressing the hot, trembling hands, "is it nothing for my daughter to fulfil her father's prayerful entreaties, to receive his tenderest blessing?"

She bent her proud head, and the warm tears fell upon his hand.

"Let us say no more now. We will return to our own home as soon as possible; and there, my child, I trust you will have time for calmer reflection. Treat the count civilly, for my sake, and leave the rest to be decided at a future time."

"You are my father, the father of whose unswayed name and spotless integrity I have been prouder than a princess of her royal lineage," she murmured incoherently. "How can I doubt that you advise everything for my best interest? Yes, we will let the matter rest. We will put off the battle day, the facing of the foe, although it seems to me weak and cowardly."

He kissed her, and had no other answer. In the midst of it, the count was seen coming slowly through a cross path, smoking tranquilly.

Hester Lloyd felt the blood warm angrily in her veins at the sight of that smiling, mocking face, but she controlled herself from betraying it.

He threw away his cigar as he came nearer, and

bowed with the respectful air he always kept for her.

"Enjoying this delicious air, Miss Lloyd? It gives one a faint hint of Elysium, to be sure. I hope you have been re-considering your determination to fly from this charming place. You are not going back quite yet?"

"Not yet. I have yielded to my father's wishes," answered Hester Lloyd, proudly, for all the humility of the tone.

He shot one glance of triumph at the averted face, and then bent over a blossoming plant, and played carelessly with the perfumed petals.

"I am delighted to hear it. It is very sweet and lovely to see such filial devotion. I cannot express how much it charms me."

Miss Lloyd bit her lip, and turned to her father abruptly:

"And now, papa, I will beg you to excuse me. I must look after Kitty, I suppose. She can wait nicely if I give her my arm, and she needs an airing."

And without waiting for his answer she turned, and walked away with hasty step.

"What a charming woman!" ejaculated Count Lubin. "My dear Lloyd, do you know there is just enough fire and spirit in your daughter? One would never tire or sicken with such a companion."

Mr. Lloyd only sighed. His heart was heavy within him.

When Hester reached the hall, she found Kitty propped on either side, walking and laughing merrily at the incongruity of size between her two supporters.

"Oh, Miss Barbara, you would answer for a fairy godmother, and go into a nutshell, I do believe. Here is mamma a whole head and a half above you. It gives me the feeling of having a pigmy and a giant made into fellow crutches. Ah! here is Hester! Now I can mate my giant. Godmother, won't you excuse me, if I dispense with such plebeian service from you? You can find more congenial fairy work, I am sure."

"And what may it be, pray?" asked Miss Barbara, gaily, while Hester silently took her place. "I'm at your command, of course, wand and all."

"Let one think," responded Kitty, as merrily, "you've wrought so many magic spells. I have the fortune—that is, my pumpkin has turned into a coach, and my mice are already postillions—waiting over there in that pleasant home, which Lord Cuthbert has selected for us, and where you are all coming presently to make us an endless series of visits. My ball dresses too are at hand, that is, they are safely wrapped up in those shining gold pieces which mamma brought yesterday, with such secret delight and crowded into my purse. And best and dearest of all, there is this hope of finding Ross, my darling brother, for I seem to feel assured, in the very depths of my heart, that this strange Englishman in Geneva will prove to be he. Ah, my dear Miss Barbara, I am so blessed and happy now, what is there left for me to ask?"

"Hadn't I better look around for the glass slipper, and the prince?" questioned Miss Barbara, roughly.

"To be sure. I had quite forgotten they were yet to appear. Where is your wand, fairy godmother? Bid them hither at once."

The others laughed heartily at Kitty's blushes, but her mother only sighed, which Kitty observed.

"Dear mamma, you are out of spirits this morning. I know what it is. You are anxious and disturbed by this news from Geneva; afraid to trust to hope, for fear of falling back into renewed grief. Take the comfort while you may, I beg of you. Something seems to speak to me and assure me that he is still alive."

"Have you taken any steps towards ascertaining the truth?" asked Miss Lloyd.

"Lord Cuthbert is going himself this afternoon to investigate personally. The answer he received to this written inquiry is rather unsatisfactory. I have given him authority to act for me in the matter."

"He is young, but I am sure you have discovered by this time that you cannot obtain wiser counsel. Sir Charles was talking with me about Cuthbert, when he was here the other day," observed Miss Barbara, with eager and proud enthusiasm, "and he assured me that the improvements and management, here at the Lyle estates, was something quite remarkable, and was drawing attention from the whole shire. I am sure I think my dear lad has quite established his character now before the whole country."

"You will not fear my stubborn opposition either," said Miss Lloyd, not without a little roughness in her smile. "I could see that Lady Worthley had nearly forgiven me, at that same visit, though she took a little satisfaction in stabbing me with that remark about her exceeding surprise when she heard that I was visiting at Lyle Hall."

And then she added more earnestly:

"I quite agree with you, Miss Barbara. I think Lord Cuthbert has established his character beyond the reach of cavilling or aspersion."

"Oh, thank you, Hester, thank you," exclaimed Miss Barbara, in keen satisfaction at the earnest look upon the girl's face.

The remark had reached farther than was intended.

At an open door Lord Cuthbert was seen standing with a letter in his hand, and though his eyes were bent down upon it, the glow on his face revealed that he had heard Miss Lloyd's pronouncement.

On the other side, at the same instant, had entered Mr. Lloyd and Count Lubin, and it was more than probable they also had been entertained by the little scene. Hester could hardly say why she felt so thoroughly annoyed, but she understood promptly the ireful glance which Count Lubin flung after the retreating master of Lyle Hall.

"If it might only hurry him away," she wished.

But she did not sufficiently understand the wily count. The new suspicion which had entered his mind, was an added reason for him to remain at Lyle Hall, while the Lloyds were there. It gave him also a keener interest to watch the young master.

He followed him out that very day, under pretence of interest in the details of the estate business, and before he returned had accomplished his object. He had discovered that Lord Cuthbert adored Miss Lloyd, that he had some secret trouble, some closet skeleton; and he had also electrified the young nobleman by confessing, in the most frank and confidential manner, that he, Count Lubin, came with the consent and approbation of the great merchant, and loving father, to win the beautiful Hester for his wife.

Lord Cuthbert was so thoroughly stunned by this unexpected blow, that he was not able to give the matter his usual clear and vigorous thought. He only felt thrillingly alive to the conviction that, for all his assumed resignation to her indifference, he had secretly cherished the most vivid hope of sometime, somehow, winning her love, claiming the priceless jewel for his own. He was only conscious of a desperate longing to escape from the gay smiles and nonchalant talk of this man, who had stepped in between him and the prize. And Count Lubin, willing to allow him to have his way, after he had accomplished his own will, presently left him taking notes with the steward, and sauntered away to the house.

The steward saw that there was hardly the accustomed keenness of attention, and glancing at his master's face, was grieved to see that it was graver and paler than common.

"Haden't I better bring you all these items this evening, your lordship? It is growing warm out, and I am afraid you are not quite well," he asked, respectfully.

"Thank you, Watson, perhaps it will be as well. But I am anxious to have all the accounts straightened up promptly. I want to know just how the estate stands."

"It will show a gain beyond anything the shire has seen for a dozen years," answered Watson, warmly. "Your lordship will treble the value of everything in another year."

He smiled mournfully.

"I have not wasted the substance, at all events," he repeated, thoughtfully.

"I should like to see the man as dares hint such a thing," cried Watson, out of the loyal devotion of his honest heart. "And that makes me think, my lord, I've been meaning to mention something to you. There's a young-looking chap hanging about these parts for a week back, and to my thinking he is keeping watch over this place, or somebody here. He has queer ways with him, partly like as if he was hiding from honest curiosity, and partly like one half-crazed. You can't see a great deal of his face, because he keeps it tied up, for the tooth-ache, he says, but it lasts a longer time than most folks could stand tooth-ache. I've seen him once or twice myself, and the last time I made free to talk with him, to find out something about his business. I did not get much, nor did he, though he tried to find out about your visitors, my lord. Then he asked me all about the affairs here, the tenantry, and the mills, and the redeemed land. And of that which was not private I made bold to tell him, and he seemed mightily interested, and somehow so sorrowful like, I couldn't help feeling for him. And when I said, what all the country says—your lordship will pardon me—that there was never a Lyle before showed such a head for business, and such an honourable character, he said it over after me, and groaned like one suddenly stricken. It has puzzled me a good deal, and so I made bold to tell you."

Lord Cuthbert had listened at first with careless and wandering attention, but all at once he started, and turned upon the speaker with a startled, ghastly face.

"Watson, Watson," he cried, "tell me how the man looks!"

"Indeed, your lordship, it's not so easy, because as I said, he wears the great handkerchief tied over his face, and a cap pushed down low on his forehead, and then the collar of his cloak is turned up around his neck. It's evident he's a man just out of sickness, for his hands are white as a baby's, and his cheeks are thin."

"But his eyes—are they—blue?"

"Just as blue as can be. I thought at first they made me think of your lordship's; but when I looked again, I found they were a great deal bluer."

The master of Lyle Hall and its broad domains, caught a broken, shivering breath, like that of a drowning man. He stretched out his hand, and clutched at Watson's arm.

"Watson, Watson, the man must be found. You must bring him to me, and—and the accounts must all be straightened up."

"I will do my best, your lordship. I have tried to find out where the man staid at night. I have no doubt he is posted somewhere within view, this blessed minute. The other men have told me about meeting him at odd places enough. It's clear he's familiar in these parts."

"He must be found," repeated Lord Cuthbert, and Watson, for the life of him, could not tell if his face was filled with wild joy or pitiful anguish.

But the young gentleman walked hastily away, and left him pondering upon this most unusual behaviour.

His lordship, however, seemed destined to receive startling revelations that forenoon. He had hardly entered the park, when the head gamekeeper started up from behind a knoll, and came towards him, touching his hat respectfully.

"If you please, my lord, I would like a word with you. I have been thinking you ought to know there's a queer cove hanging about the grounds, and spying everything going on. I've had my eye on him, thinking, you know, he is some Lunnon chap, staying down here with thoughts of taking a few shots at your game. But I hain't caught him with a gun yet, and somehow I don't believe he's that sort. I've tracked him over to 'The Stag.' He's lodging there, but they don't know nothing, except there's been a man down to see him, who 'peared like a policeman."

Lord Cuthbert was more on his guard now, and returned, in something like his usual tone:

"Thank you, Blake, you do quite right to come to me with these things. At 'The Stag,' you say. I will ride over and see what it means, this very hour."

He turned as he spoke and took a short and unfrequented path which led towards the stableyard.

A high primrose bank bordered this path on either side, and hid a short person from observation, which accounted for the fact that until he came around a curve, directly upon them, he was not aware that it was occupied by two persons, children he thought them at first, one small and slight, and dressed daintily enough for an elfin page, and the other likewise slender and graceful, with a black veil covering her face from observation, and shrouding likewise half her figure.

The lad was speaking vehemently, and the girl, or woman, whichever it might be, plainly expressed by her gestures disapprobation, if not anger.

The moment the lad perceived Lord Cuthbert he uttered an exclamation of pleasure.

"See, see, Nina, this is the very gentleman. He can tell you if I have spoken the truth. It is the master, Lord Lyle, for I asked yesterday what was his name. He will have no reason for speaking falsely. Let him tell you."

The boy's face, full of eager pleading, of singular unchildlike intelligence, interested Lord Cuthbert, even in the midst of his own agitated thoughts.

"Is there any way I can be of service?" he asked, courteously, while he had advanced towards the pair.

The lady put back her veil. No, it was not a child, though the slight frame, and short stature, had suggested the idea. In the great, deep eyes, a woman's fierce and passionate heart was shining out.

"I wonder what will he think of us? Ion, it is your fault," she said, with a pretty foreign accent, and a courtesy which was grace itself. "My lord will pardon our intrusion upon his grounds. It is absurd enough; but this jealous boy has been watching a friend of mine—a guest of your lordship's, I understand—I would not for all the world, that he should learn how foolish I was to allow Ion to drag me thither."

"It was not foolish, Nina. Let me tell him, and ask the only question that is necessary," interrupted the boy. "Your lordship will pardon me that I was below there when you went along the field towards the canal. I was hiding in the clump of willows when—when—that man talked with you—Count Lubin, I mean. I was hiding away from his eyes,

and I could not help hearing what he said. He told you that he was going to marry a lady—Miss Hester Lloyd—please, my lord, did he not tell you that?"

"He said it, certainly," answered Lord Cuthbert; "but saying is one thing, and winning the lady's consent is another."

"He said it," ejaculated the strange woman, with a sharp catch in her silvery voice; "oh, it is too monstrous!"

"Hush!" whispered the precocious child, evidently seeking to restrain her excitement. "Be careful what you say. Are you satisfied that I have not cheated you?"

"I will be," answered she, stamping a foot his lordship perceived was slender and supple enough for a fairy.

"Then let us go—go at once."

She yielded passively to the boy's guidance, but the latter left her in a moment, and came running back.

"Good sir—kind gentleman, you will say nothing about our being here—to him, that serpent. Promise me, for sweet Mary's sake, that you will not."

"Not to him, certainly," replied the astonished Lord Cuthbert. "But what am I to think of this? The lady claims my warmest regards. For her sake—"

"For her sake watch the man closely. He is a vile deceiver—in every way—in every way! But do not put him upon our track. He has wrought us misery and trouble enough already!"

He waited for no further questioning, but ran back, and hurried his sister toward the stile which gave access to the highway.

Lord Cuthbert walked on slowly.

"I must investigate the matter," he murmured. "After the nearer, more closely-pressing affair is settled, I will look into this. Her happiness must not be perilled, though I may never hold a share in it. How my heart throbs! I cannot tell if it is exultation, the joyful yearning towards forthcoming relief, or the sharp anguish of new forebodings. Oh, heavens! is it possible that I may be so near laying off this heavy burden—putting away this cankering secret—coming out of this damp dismal cloud?"

He went to the stable, brought out King John with his own hands, and leaped upon his back the moment the ostler had buckled the girths, and scarcely drew rein until the foaming animal stopped before the porch of the little country inn.

The master came hurrying out, obsequious to a visitor but seldom honouring his humble roof.

"Good-day, your lordship. Can I serve you in any way?"

"My men have been telling me of a stranger stopping here. Can I arrange with you to see him—to speak with him?"

"He is just eating his dinner; he has queer hours. Walk right in, my lord. I needn't announce you at all. He'll be honoured by such an interruption, certainly."

"I wish to be left alone with him—no eaves-droppers around," said Lord Cuthbert, his voice husky and hoarse, and his heart throbbing as if it would burst within his breast.

"Certainly, certainly, my lord," echoed Bonifacio with a stare of blended surprise and curiosity, and led the way into the house, through a public receiving room, across a narrow entry, and pointing towards a closed door there, bowed and withdrew.

Lord Cuthbert stood one moment with his hand on the knob, a deadly paleness on his face, and a fear and a prayer struggling in his heart. Then he turned it slowly, and went in.

CHAPTER XXI.

Mrs. CARTWRIGHT had seen Lord Cuthbert riding out of the avenue at King John's swiftest pace. A look of keen pain and deep solicitude was on her face, as she leaned silently at her window and looked after him, never stirring her eyes from their fixed gaze, even after the graceful figure had disappeared. Her stay at Lyle Hall, or the excitements of the new fortune had worn upon her. She looked older, less serene and saintly, and there was a tremulous unrest about her, which was a perpetual pain and surprise to Kitty.

The latter was lying on the couch, asleep, as her mother believed, but the sharp footfalls of the galloping horse had roused her, and while Mrs. Cartwright was entirely unconscious of the fact, Kitty's eyes had unclosed, and were fixed scrutinisingly upon her face. Free from the mask they had worn of late, those beloved features showed sharp and haggard, the eyes hollow, the lips nervous with inward pain to a degree which quite terrified the impulsive and tender-hearted Kitty.

"Mamma, mamma!" exclaimed she, "you are breaking your heart over Ross. And what is to become of me?"

Mrs. Cartwright started, and rose hastily from her seat, coming to the couch with her own affectionate smile.

"What, awake so soon, Kitty? How you startled me! Pray, what do you mean by that sorrowful face?"

"Oh, mamma, I wish you would not try to deceive me! It is all so strange to me—you bore sorrow, poverty, and bereavement, with a saint's calmness, and now that heaven has given you back to health, and is showering blessing after blessing upon us, you are fretting yourself into a shadow. Dear, dear mamma, even if this rumour is false, and something seems to assure me it is not, even then there is nothing beyond what we have borne before. You have said it many times, that Ross was safe in heaven, and it was well. And if he is alive, and coming swiftly to us, to find you restored, and prosperity waiting for him, it is well also. Why need you wear away your life with this secret trouble? The suspense is cruel. I feel it keenly, but yet it is beautiful and glad to have the hope, while the worst is only what we have resigned ourselves to, a year and more ago."

It was a very long speech for Kitty, and a very grave one.

Mrs. Cartwright kissed the tremulous lips with a tenderness that was almost solemn, and wiped away with a gentle hand the sparkling drops still clinging to the silky eyelashes.

"My darling, my sweet, innocent, guileless child," said she, "bear patiently with me a little longer. I confess that I am strangely stirred from my old life. I know that Ross is in my thoughts day and night, with a perplexity of hope and fear, love and grief, that could not be if he was indeed safe in heaven! Oh, the beloved ones are safe there—and only there!"

A stifled sob broke up her voice.

"Dear mother—dear, dear mother," sighed Kitty, overwhelmed by a nameless grief, "there is something you have not told me. Lord Cuthbert, too, was strangely moved, now I remember. If I thought—"

"Hush, dear, you must not think about it at all. The solution must come soon. Be bright and hopeful, like your nature, my Kitty. It may be that I have vexed myself with a shadow."

"Where is Hester?" asked Kitty, presently.

"Gone to ride with her father and Miss Barbara, and I think the Count Lubin went also."

"What do you think about this Count Lubin, mamma?"

"I have not thought of him at all, dear child."

"I suppose not," answered Kitty.

And then she sighed softly, and added, a moment after:

"It is a lovely day, isn't it? How pleasant it must be in the gardens! I don't believe but I might walk there, with your help, and rest on the rustic seat. It would be so charming to sit there in the warm air. Might I try, mamma?"

"Are you sure you are strong enough? You cannot afford to put yourself back for a mere whim."

"Oh, I have it! Don't you know how that good Luke wanted me to let him make a chair, he and John, with those stout arms of theirs, to carry me out for a ride yesterday? They shall take me out, and leave me in the garden, and when I am ready to come in, I can call them. That will not be any risk at all. And it would be quite an experience. I should feel like a child again."

"You are little more than a child now, Kitty," smiled her mother, "but I will go down and see what Luke says."

"Oh, I know very well the good fellow will be delighted. Don't you propose that they carry me in a sedan, or on the bamboo couch, or anything of the sort. I am going in the child's fashion."

She had her way, and it was a pretty sight when the two servitors, with keen appreciation of the honour conferred upon them, brought her tenderly and carefully to the rear garden—her fair face with its bright eyes full of pleasant excitement, its smiling lips, and dancing brown curls between theirs, her white arms laid across their brawny shoulders.

The first labour was too sunny, and then Luke suggested:

"There is the rustic seat under the grapery, down by the edge of the park avenue. It's always warm, but free from glare there, and the brook makes a pleasant talk, and you hear the wild birds over in the trees."

"Oh, how charming! Luke, you talk poetry," exclaimed Kitty, "but your poor arms, can they carry me so far?"

"Indeed, miss, I wish it was farther," said Luke, laughing, "if you've a mind, we'll give you a turn around the avenue."

"Well, no, I don't think I'll abuse good nature in that fashion. Take me to the brook that talks pleasantly."

They found the pretty spot, just as Luke predicted, free from glare but yet warm and dry.

Mrs. Cartwright had a shawl on her arm, and fixed it carefully over the injured ankle, and Luke ran back for some cushions, and brought a little basket of fruit with them, and Mrs. Cartwright had a tiny book, and between them all, she was settled in such luxurious comfort that she declared she should fancy herself some eastern sultana, and be presently clapping her hands to summon a band of slaves.

"You might do better than that," said Luke, producing an ivory whistle from his pocket. "It's a deal of trouble to clap the hands loud enough to be heard, but here's a whistle that will sound all over the garden, and Stephen is only a little ways from here, tying up the vines. I'll speak to him to come and find out what you want when it calls."

Luke admired Miss Cartwright exceedingly; her bright face, her genial smile, and childish ingenuousness, had quite captivated his fancy, and it was a secret hope of his that his master would also fall in love, and bring her to be the mistress of Lyle Hall.

Kitty gave him a bright smile, which was the richest reward the honest man could receive.

"Now go away, all of you. I feel like the queen of an enchanted realm. Mamma, write all your letters, and take a little peace in my absence. I shouldn't wonder if I remained all the afternoon. Yes, Luke, when I want my chair I shall whistle."

They went away, not without many backward glances of smiling admiration of the pretty picture she made, lying there under the cool canopy of vine leaves, with her white dress fluttering down to the daisied turf, and her sunny brown curls straying in a golden shower over the velvet cushions which supported her hand, with her smiling red lips, and her innocent blue eyes roving dreamily here and there.

There was someone else saw it also, who found it equally charming. Someone else who was familiar with the fascination of the retired spot, with the sweet, still silence, broken only by chirp of bird, and whirr of insect, and the musical monotone of the babbling brooklet. He was lying on the mossy bank beyond her, lightly screened by the interlacing tendrils of the vine which had leaped from the upper trellis to an outreaching branch of chestnut, and crept down, and out, and in, until it had made a matted partition which swayed with the lightest touch of the roving wind. He kept still, half from a gentlemanly desire to save startling her, and half from pure enjoyment of the innocent artlessness of her look and manner.

(To be continued.)

KEEP NEAR TO YOUR CHILDREN.

We think parents lose much, both of pleasure to themselves and of influence over their children, by assuming too great a degree of dignity. Exclusiveness is a bar to all confidence, and the child who feels too great awe to give its confidence freely to its parents, will soon learn to deceive. We do not believe in encouraging children to tell each little incident or conversation with its playmate or friends; this would lead to gossip, one of the lowest of all petty vices. And a child who is taught to tattle, by this means will soon, very naturally, learn to tell untruths for the purpose of giving you pleasure. Having really nothing wonderful to relate, he will invent something. This is the true source of gossip among grown-up people. Not being sufficiently intelligent to lead conversation into the fields of literature, science or art, they naturally (as politeness and a desire to please require that they talk about something) converse about their neighbours and their affairs—and in case they know but little about these, they imagine a great deal and tell it for the truth.

But children should be spoken to freely about their little joys and sorrows; and as they need a great deal of sympathy in their troubles, and of encouragement in their endeavours, it should certainly be given them. We pity the man or woman who cannot remember the joy a little petting and appreciation gave when he or she was a child. The hunger of the childish heart is almost fearful in its lonely, unloved life, as many are fated to know; and kindness can mould them into any shape you desire, as the warm summer sun will soften to your purpose the hardest wax. Who can calculate the number of children whose souls have starved for sympathy until they grew reckless of everything, and ceased to "try, try again," simply because they had no incentive to try?

When we grow too old to remember how we felt when we were young, we shall no longer be fitted to guide one of these little ones. Many fathers and mothers might be far happier if they would only remember this. A grown-up person can never be too simple—too childlike, in his or her manner when with children. Never grow too far from them. Be to them

elder brothers and sisters rather than rabbis and queens. Let them see that their little wants are understood. Trifles make up life, and half the sorrow of earth comes from not being understood. Little attentions are dearer to the heart than great and costly presents. Join in your children's games—listen to their thoughts and encourage their expression. Never laugh at a child for telling its simple, childlike thoughts. Nothing checks openness so much as ridicule. A child would much rather be taken alone, and scolded heartily or punished severely, than be ridiculed before company. Nothing is so mortifying—so apt to engender bitterness and hate as this, and parents and elder brothers and sisters should avoid it by all means.

Invent every possible amusement to keep your boys happy at home in the evenings. Never mind if they do scatter books and pictures, coats, hats and boots. Never mind if they do make a noise around you with their whistling and hurrahing! We should stand aghast if we could have a vision of the young men gone to utter destruction for the very reason that, having cold, disagreeable, dull firesides at home, they sought amusement elsewhere. The influence of a loving mother or sisters is incalculable. Like the circle formed by casting a stone into the water, it goes on and through a man's whole life. Circumstances and worldly pleasures may weaken the remembrance for a time, but each touch upon the chord of memory will awaken the old-time music, and her face, her voice, and her loving words will come up before him like a revelation. This influence will last while life continues—and who shall say it is foolish or vain? Give them your love—your full, abundant, and overflowing love, and it will bring you a rich reward.

The time will come before you think, when you would give the world to have your house tumbled by the dear hands of those very boys; when your heart shall long for their noisy steps in the hall, and their ruddy cheeks laid up to yours; when you would rather have their jolly whistle than the music of Strakosch or the songs of Jenny Lind; when you would gladly have dirty carpets, ay, live without carpets at all, but to have their bright, strong forms beside you once more. Then play with and pet them. Praise Johnny's drawing, Betty's music, and baby's first attempt at writing his name. If one shows a talent for figures, tell him he is to be your famous mathematician, and if another loves geography, tell him he will be sure to make a great traveller or a foreign minister. Go with them to see their young rabbits, chickens and pigeons. Have them gather you mosses, grasses and bright autumn leaves to decorate their rooms when the snow is over the earth. And you will keep yourself young and fresh by entering into their joys. The happiest and the best of men and women are those who have the most of the boy and girl nature. While you keep this you will never grow morose and sullen; you will never grow cold and hard; you will never grow too grand and dignified, or too far off from your children to understand them, and to be understood by them. In the lovely character of Edna, in Miss Mulock's "Woman's Kingdom," there is a bright picture of this perfect sympathy between a mother and her boys. They knew she loved them too well to deny anything that was for their good, and submitted quietly to her decision against their day of sport, grow even joyful when she offered to give her whole afternoon to them; and each brain was instantly puzzling itself with the great question: "What will please mother most?"

Then keep near to your children. Let the tendrils of your heart twine about them, and in age their deep love will be your comfort and support.

M. E. N.

LORD MAYO has, at his own expense, it seems, sent an elephant to the Dublin Zoological Gardens.

THE past season at Nice has been the gayest ever known. There was an immense amount of gambling going on. Baccarat was the favourite game.

A FRENCH farmer has found that the addition of a quantity of hops to the fodder of his cows produced a large increase in the production of milk.

THE LEGION OF HONOUR.—Recent decrees have made five promotions to the grade of Officer in the Legion of Honour, eleven nominations as Knight. The military medal is also conferred on thirty-two privates.

WE learn from Calcutta that the widow Begum of Nawab Kurroem Shah, a brother of Tipoo Sultaia, died on the 17th April. She had arrived at the ripe age of 114, and possessed to the last the full exercise of her faculties.

IT is rumoured that it is the intention of the Queen to visit the Isle of Man some time in the month of August, and that Mr. Goldie Taubman has offered, or will offer, his mansion at the Nunery to her Majesty during her stay, which it is expected will be for two or three days.



[PAUL'S REPROACHES.]

THE RIVAL SISTERS.

CHAPTER XII.

For a moment, Minnie stood dumbfounded, her senses almost taken away, by the effect of the dreadful intelligence so abruptly conveyed; and then as she gazed upon the poor creature who wept upon her bosom, tender compassion overcame all other feelings, her heart filled with kindness towards the sufferer, and smoothing the golden hair, she said, soothingly:

"Louise be calm. God directs for the best."

"I know, I know!" she moaned. "But, oh, Minnie, I am so unhappy. I am nearly heart-broken, and my only sin is in loving! Oh, if Paul could but love me for one hour, I would die content!"

That word brought back to Minnie the thoughts of her brother, and looking towards a sofa, she beheld him moving to and fro in heart-consuming sorrow.

"Oh let me go to him," cried the wife; "oh, let me go!"

Minnie hesitated.

Louise noticed it, and in pleading tones continued: "Oh sister, he will injure himself—he is my husband—I will pray him to receive me!" and she moved towards him.

Placing her hand softly upon his heated brow, she tenderly said:

"Oh Paul, my own love, will you—"

He dashed her hand away, and leaped to his feet, while his face was contorted by a spasm of pain, and his eyes glared with a fitful light.

"You ask me to love you—you who have rendered life a curse to me, and nearly killed my Mabel!"

As these cruel words grated harshly upon her ear, her soul was filled with sorrow. Those words from him she loved—ay, worshipped! For a moment her eyes were blinded by the tears which coursed down her cheeks; then she imploringly articulated:

"Oh, Paul, I have only one excuse to offer—only one thing to palliate my sin, and that is my love for you; that love urged, impelled me, I could not resist! Oh, my husband, will you forgive me?" and she gazed steadily upon him, eagerly noting each variation of his expression.

He trembled; then as he thought of "what might have been," his anger again controlled him, and casting a scornful glance upon her, he contemptuously rejoined:

"Woman, talk not of love; you know not the meaning of the word, you villify it by your utterance;

love could not nourish and wreak revenge upon a sister!"

A cry of anguish arose from the oppressed heart of poor Louise, and she buried her face in her hands and sobbed.

"Oh, heaven! take me away—my love is hopeless; he hates me, reviles me, he for whom my heart bleeds! Oh! why is this? Paul—Paul! just speak one kind word—only one, dear husband, one kind word!" and the grief-stricken girl raised her eyes beseechingly.

The tears started to Minnie's eyes, and turning to Paul, she gravely said:

"Brother, she is a woman, and entitled to respect at least for that alone; another thing, she is your wife; she knew not that the marriage was real any more than you did—it was an accident—and greater than all these, Paul, she loves you as devotedly as woman ever loved man! Will you treat her kindly for my sake, if not for her own?"

Paul Hamlin was not naturally vindictive or cruel, but earnestness in a cause which he espoused, brooked no opposition; and where his love was concerned, his ardent love, which, when fully developed as it had been for Mabel, became an indissoluble, component, infrangible part of his being, and could not forgive such a check as this.

As he listened to Minnie's words, his inflamed mind construed them wrongfully, and he felt that she too was conspiring to add to his grief. With these thoughts ruling all others, and the new opposition they engendered adding to his excitement, he stopped, glared upon her an instant, and then reproachfully replied:

"And you, too, are conspiring against me! So be it; I'm not fettered, although you think I am; the desert will hold me, the river will float me, and over this barren earth will I wander, until I meet my Mabel in heaven. You cannot separate us there, no—no!" his voice modulating into a plaintive tone as he uttered the closing words.

"You are unjust, Paul," retorted Minnie, with more spirit than usual, "you wilfully misconstrue my words."

"Nay, sister," murmured Louise, "do not reproach him; he feels very sad, broken-hearted, and I, alas, am the cause of it."

Minnie gazed upon the pale, sweet face, and felt new love, as she thought of the charitable words so kindly spoken, and bending over the grief-trembling form, she said:

"I will love you, for you are good—you shall be my sister."

"Thank—oh, thank you," Louise fervently re-

turned, "it will be some happiness to know that I am beloved by Paul's sister if not by him!" and the tears trickled down her face.

Paul stopped an instant in his agitated walk, and looked down upon her, while unconsciously a tender expression stole over his features.

Louise raised her eyes, noticed his softened look, and with gladness cried:

"Oh, my husband, you smile—is there hope that you will love me just a little?"

A heavy frown darkened his brow, he stamped his foot impatiently, and quickly rejoined:

"Never!"

Again those pitiful sobs re-echoed through the room, again that pale face assumed a look of despair, and the young wife clung to Minnie as her only friend in the wide, wide world.

Her low wail only incensed Paul, and brought more vividly before his mind the agonised face of Mabel as he last saw her. As he thought of his love for her, and knew that the woman upon the sofa was bound to him for life, it seemed as if he could tear his heart from his body; and turning fiercely towards her, ejaculated:

"Will you stop this crying? You'll drive me mad; the very sight of you raises the demon within me, until I feel as if I could take my own life—this accursed, wretched life, which you have thrust upon me!"

"No, no, Paul, take mine; my life is less than yours, for then you can love Mabel! Oh, my Paul, I had rather die by your hand than live to hear you curse me!"

Something in the tone thrilled him for an instant, in another moment it was gone, and he paced the room, muttering under his breath, while more intense grew that foreboding fire in his eye, and more wild those features, sternly set in rigid agony.

Now and then Louise gazed upon him with sorrowful love and silent pleading; love that issued from only too ardent an heart, and pleading that came from the perturbed soul. In a moment she asked:

"Minnie, will he—oh, do you think he will ever love me?"

"Heaven knows I hope so, darling; but I know not."

"Perhaps I have been in the wrong, Minnie; but I should have died had he married Mabel, though I was innocent of plotting, except the letter! I could not help it, for oh, Minnie, although he hates me, I love him better than I love my life," and the light of tender truth in the large blue eyes verified her words.

"I know you do, dear, and I hope he will appreciate it, though I cannot tell what effect this will have upon his future."

"Oh, Minnie, you do not fear it will injure him! Oh, what have I done—what have I done! Oh, I wish I had died ere I had brought this upon him!"

"Dear sister, speak not so, I beg of you. Our sorrow is hard to bear, but it may not be long? If Paul knew you better, he could not help loving you."

"Oh, do you think so?" she asked, a gleam of light breaking over the pale face. "Tell me, Minnie, what can I do? Why, to win one word of kindness I would do anything—and a glance of love—oh, Minnie, I would almost die for that!"

And the hands were clasped as though to retain the hope, which might cheer the fainting heart.

"Love will conquer everything, darling, and such love as yours would soften the hardest heart; so don't be sad, but try to smile, and perhaps bright days will come, when Paul will love his beautiful wife."

"Oh, bless you, Minnie, bless you!" cried the poor young creature. "If it were not for you, I could not live in this dark, dreary world, where even my husband abhors me; you are so good, sister—sweet sister!"

And with intense gratitude expressed in her features, she drew Minnie's soft cheek to hers, and repeatedly kissed it.

Presently Paul arose, and was about to leave the room, when Minnie said:

"Where are you going, brother; will you return to dinner?"

"Ha, ha!" again that hollow, unnatural laugh.

A terrible fear sprang into existence in the wife's heart; she forgot her repugnance to her, and leaping to her feet, she threw her arms about his neck, and imploringly cried:

"Oh, Paul, if you ever loved Mabel, for her sake I beg—beseech you not to condemn her sister to widowhood! Remember, dear—dear Paul, that I have no one to love me now!"

And the poorly drops trembled upon the long lashes.

Minnie turned away to hide her emotion.

An instant Paul Hamlin gazed into that face bent so pleadingly to his. "For Mabel's sake" rang upon his ear and actuated his heart, for the latter was now touched. Quickly turning, he impulsively kissed her, and then tearing himself from her arms, he left the room.

"Oh, Minnie, Minnie—dear sister! thank heaven he kissed me! I am so happy! Oh, Minnie!"

And she clasped her to her arms, while tears, now of joy, rained from her eyes.

"I would not destroy your joy, dear, but remember that he is very impulsive. Mabel's name may have impelled him to act as he did; when he returns he may be more bitter than ever."

"But for this one moment I will be happy. If he never loves me, I can know that once he kissed me! Oh, Minnie, do not speak—do not tell me that he will never repeat it—do not sadden me, for now I think of it, and it makes me happy!"

With glances of love, compassion, and sympathy, Minnie gazed upon the generous, ardent, willful child, and smiled as she thought what a load that single caress had removed from the young wife's heart.

As the day passed away, and the shadows of night began to gather, Louise apprehensively exclaimed: "Oh, Minnie, Paul has not come yet, and 'tis near night; he does not stay out late—does he?"

"Last night was only the second time within my knowledge," she replied.

The tears sprang to the wife's eyes, and she responded:

"That was the night when Paul's happiness was wrecked, and I was the innocent cause."

"You are so sensitive, darling; I did not mean to refer to that."

"I know you did not, but I cannot help thinking of it, and how happy even the repetition of those words made me, and how they have clouded Paul's life."

"Let us talk no more of it, but descend to dinner. Come, dear, it will make you feel stronger and better."

"But Paul—will he not come?"

"Soon, I hope," she cheerfully rejoined, though her heart was heavy; "but he will not care to have us wait."

Without farther speech, the young wife accompanied her only friend to the dining-hall, and lingered a few moments over a cup of chocolate, but could not be induced to take anything else.

An hour might have passed, when Paul Hamlin returned to the drawing-room. He noticed neither wife nor sister as he entered, but threw himself into a chair at a remote corner of the room, and leaned his head upon his hand.

"Let me go and comfort him, Minnie," murmured

Louise, "he will not repulse me, I know he will not."

"Let him rest to-night, dear."

"I suppose you know best; but see his dejected look—I must—I will—it is my place!" and arising, she moved timidly towards him. As she reached his chair she placed her face close to his, and whispered: "Paul, oh, Paul, you know not the extent of my love!"

"Neither do I wish to!" he angrily answered, leaping to his feet. "Must you whine around me all the time? I tell you, girl, you'll craze me! You'll make a fiend—ugh! I know not what, of me! All my love is buried—my heart is turned to ashes! Do not look at me—dare not speak to me—don't call me husband, nor Paul—don't come near me!" and he darted towards her a glance full of aversion.

Actually frightened, Louise drew back, and while her face paled, and the thoughts of her transient joy were dispelled, she called to Minnie to help her.

Minnie came forward, and clasping her hand, led her to a sofa.

"Oh sister," gasped the unloved wife, "Paul's unkindness will kill me—I fear for his reason, Minnie; and it's all my fault, all mine!"

The apprehension expressed by Louise had troubled Minnie for the last few days, and she now feared that this shock upon her brother's delicate nerves, might accomplish that dread result. However, she gave no new alarm to Louise, but gently replied:

"It is as I prophesied; he feels worse than he did this morning; but do not be down-hearted, dear; there is another day coming, and we know not what it may bring forth."

Louise tried to smile her thanks, and then directed her eyes upon her husband; yes, her husband in name, but not in heart; her husband by human law, but not by God's, for he did not love her; and as she thought of this—of her worthless life, of Mabel's sorrow, of her own grief, and her father's curse, the scalding tears filled her eyes, and her sobs nearly choked her breath.

"Come, dear, let us go to my room; the sight of Paul only increases your sorrow," and Minnie raised her to a sitting posture.

A moment she glanced languidly at her husband, and then turned to Minnie with a deep sigh.

"Good-night, brother," said Minnie, quietly.

"Good-night," he said, in cold hard tones.

Louise broke away from Minnie's grasp, and approaching him, tearfully murmured:

"Will you not say 'good-night,' to your wife, Paul?"

A spasm of blended rage and grief distorted his features, and he hissed:

"Why will you torture me? You are my wife, and may God bless you with his love, for I cannot with mine; good-night, Louise," and he turned away.

An instant she wavered, then flew to his arms, pressed a kiss upon his lips, and was about to depart, when he thought of her great love for him, and pressing her to his breast, kissed her, and put her away.

She raised her heart in thankfulness, and then casting one more glance towards him, drew near Minnie, and with her left the room.

Until midnight Paul Hamlin sat in his chair, a prey to most bitter thoughts. Only a few hours ago and Mabel—his Mabel—was promised to him. Now he was bound for life to one whom he could not love, and constrained to see her who was his very life, pine away, and perhaps die before his eyes.

The reflection was productive of torture—torture which caused his reason to tremble upon its throne, and made life a dark, dreary desert of speechless misery, wherein all was but a mockery—a mockery which aroused his worst passions—a mockery that rendered existence a curse.

At last he wearily arose, ascended to his room, and without disrobing, threw himself upon the bed.

Sleep was impossible—his brow throbbed as if his head were about to be rent asunder; and as thought after thought assailed his mind, and impressed more fully upon him his desolated condition, he leaped from the couch, and clenching his fists, exclaimed in tones of frenzy:

"What is life without my Mabel—what is it? Only a curse, lingering and long drawn out? A path where thorns protrude that lacerate my very heart—a path where no light can shine—a path devoid of one comfort, of one ray of hope! And why should I drag myself like a dead weight through this? I will not! Since I am doomed to this, 'twere better death—and now!" and his eye sent forth a brilliant gleam of awful portent, while his face was pallid, and the lips firmly compressed.

Silently, and casting cautious glances around, he advanced to the dressing-table, filled a glass with water, and then with trembling fingers drew a paper from his pocket. Quickly unfolding it, he shook the powder into the water, and glared upon it an instant with a feverish look.

In a moment he slowly raised the cup to his lips. At that instant, when Paul Hamlin's life "hung upon a thread," the wall opened at his rear—a little powerful man with a heavy black beard and of dark aspect, sprang into the apartment, and struck the cup from his hand, exclaiming:

"Fool—would you take that which it is not in your power to restore?"

Paul Hamlin started back, then with a demoniacal shriek he sprang towards the intruder.

The intruder deftly avoided him, and drawing a pistol, levelled it at him, and imperturbably said:

"Don't tempt me, I'm an excellent shot!"

The cool, unflinching gray eye, and undaunted manner of the stranger, together with his commanding influence, restored Paul's scattered reason, and he sank into a chair, faint from his terrible excitement.

Paul passed his hand across his brow, to assure himself that he did not dream, and then as his powers of mind resumed their wonted action, he observed:

"Whoever you are, you have saved my life, and I—"

"Good-night!"

As the stranger uttered the last word, the gas was extinguished as if by some invisible hand, and Paul Hamlin was left in total darkness. An instant more, and the gas was as mysteriously lighted, and he was alone.

"Do I dream?" he exclaimed, gazing around in bewilderment, and pressing his hand to his excited temples; "or have I lost my senses?—No, no, it is real, and yet so sudden and startling, so weird and strange, that I can hardly believe I am in my right mind! Surely there was a man here, and yet my door was locked, and that is the only ingress. Oh, what does this mean?" and he sank into a chair, and for a few moments remained silent.

At last he arose and moved to his bed. As he passed the bureau, he noticed a packet.

"Another mystery," he mused, "for this was not here before," and he proceeded to open it.

As his eye fell upon the writing, he started, and then drawing nearer the light, perused the following words with breathless interest:

"DEAR PAUL:—Bear your burden meekly for my sake. Love and cherish Louise, for she has a noble heart, and will make you a good wife, for she loves you more than her own life. We shall meet in heaven, if not on earth. Remember, Paul, cherish Louise, for she is my sister; for I could not love you did I think you would do otherwise.—MABEL"

The tears came to Paul Hamlin's eyes.

"God bless you, my heart's love!" he murmured, pressing the paper to his lips. "You are an angel, and I will do your bidding, though it break my heart. Oh, unselfish, enduring woman, would to Heaven I had your fortitude!"

And then throwing himself upon his couch, with Mabel's letter next his heart, he soon fell into a sweet sleep, while all the time these Christian words made music on his ear.

CHAPTER XIII.

SIX months had passed away since the day on which Louise Leigh entered the home of Paul Hamlin as his unloved wife. During that time the roses upon her cheeks had nearly faded, and the blue eyes shone with a light which told of severe heart trial. She had no reflections to cast upon her husband, for since that night when he received Mabel's missive, he had treated her with a studied politeness, and evinced a growing respect for her wishes, which though pleasant to her, at last became a mockery, and drowned the hope that he would eventually overcome her, which had sprang into existence upon the change of his manner towards her.

As that hope at last died out from her heart, she sank into a kind of apathy, a general listlessness, which rendered her appearance doubly sad, and raised Minnie's most tender sympathies to such an extent, that she held a long conversation with Paul, and begged him to try and love the wife whose life was slowly ebbing away because of his coldness.

He listened to her patiently, again read Mabel's note that he might draw strength from it, and for a few days after maintained a moderate show of affection for his suffering wife, who hailed it as a breath of joy from heaven, and for a short time seemed like the light, happy Louise of other days.

But these periods were as rare as they were evanescent. Paul could not dissemble, and exhibit a love that he did not feel; consequently he soon relaxed into his former manner of deferential kindness, and left poor Louise to mourn over her cruel fate, and think of the bitterness of unrequited love.

Minnie, whose heart had gone out to the oppressed girl upon the first flush of her grief, now felt a daily increasing love for her, and showed it in every possible way, and persistently endeavoured to lighten

her burden, and raise in the heart of Paul an appreciation of her noble qualities.

The last six months to Paul Hamlin had been a fearful struggle between right and wrong. His impulse often urged him to the wine cup to drown his sorrows, but he had only once yielded. An influence, powerful though mythical, at these times roused into action his sense and nobler feelings, which eventually quelled the uprisings of his rebellious and delirious grief.

He had not seen Mabel, only heard from her through the agency of her brother, who visited the Hamlin's rarely at first, but, as time wore on, more frequently. Paul heard of Mabel's patience, how her time was employed in doing good among the poor of the city, and thereby engaging her mind a part of the time with other's woes, that, in her own grief, she might not disregard the fact that there were others in the world who were oppressed, and needed sympathy, beside herself.

This was the secret of the control which Paul exercised over himself the greater portion of the time. The thoughts of her uncomplaining demeanour, quiet fortitude, and calm resignation, made him ashamed of his own weakness, and brought to life and action what little strength he possessed.

On the clear, mild May morning of which I now write, Louise and Minnie sat in the drawing-room, gazing upon each other with faces which told of restless spirits and troubled hearts.

During the last few days Paul had again succumbed to the anguish, and his desolate condition rendered him almost frantic. He had not sought artificial consolation, which, of course, was very gratifying to his anxious wife and sister, neither had he, as he ought, attempted to crush his passions, which, when excited, made him, at least, dangerous and almost a maniac. He had not, to his honour be it said, acted harshly towards his wife during this interval, but had maintained a sullen silence, a rigid indifference, which pained her nearly as much.

Louise started.

"Oh, Minnie, did the outside door close? I hope it is Paul."

"Only your imagination, darling. I heard not a sound."

She sighed.

"I slept not, last night, sister, thinking of Paul; what do you suppose can detain him?"

"I think he will be here soon; I never knew him remain away all night before."

As she uttered the last word, hurried steps were heard upon the stairs, and the next moment Paul advanced into the room.

Louise looked up with a glad, earnest smile, while Minnie gazed upon her brother's pale face and heavy eyes, and knew that he had passed a night of excitement.

Paul had hardly spoken to his wife for a few days past, and as he saw the unmistakable look of delight that wreathed her features at his coming, a thought of Mabel's wish crossed his mind, and mentally reproaching himself for his neglect, he seated himself at her side, drew her upon his knee, and tenderly kissing her, said:

"Did you miss me, little wife?"

The blue eyes filled with tears at this, and leaning her head against his breast, she answered:

"Oh, so much, Paul; but now I am very happy."

"I am glad, dear, but I fear I shall destroy it, as I usually do—"

"No, no, Paul, I know your feelings," she interrupted.

"You are forgiving, Louise; I am not worthy of such charity at your hands. But I was about to inform you that I leave for Paris to-night."

"Oh, Paul," exclaimed the young wife, "do not go to-night; you make me so happy now, let me taste this cup of bliss a little longer."

"I must, darling," tenderly assuring her, "but I shall return ere long."

It was the first time he had ever exhibited such affection, and it touched deeply the heart of the hitherto almost forsaken wife.

Short was her joy, however, for in a few moments he acceded to his room, stocked his portmanteau, and returning to the drawing-room, bade them adieu.

This sudden severing of the sweetest dream of bliss she had known in her married life, gave Louise much sorrow, and she wept the long day through, and, try as she would, Minnie could afford her no comfort.

Paul had no business which required his attention that he should make this journey; he only desired to free himself from the society of his wife, that he might rest from living the lie which his regard for Mabel's desire had forced upon him—that he might participate in new scenes, see new faces, which might perchance divert his mind from the agony of his life.

(To be continued.)

THE "cream" have won a heap of money on the Derby, and the Prince of Wales is reported to have netted a clear five thousand upon the day's business. The Prince's good luck is highly gratifying.

MR. JOHN KEAST LORD, after a very successful exploration extending nearly three thousand miles along the shores of the Red Sea, is now on his way home. He and his companion Mr. Bauerman have suffered greatly from the intense heat, and are anxious for a little rest, in order to recruit their energies.

THERE is no other spoken language so cheap and expressive by telegraph as the English. So the electric wires are becoming teachers of our mother tongue in foreign countries. The same amount of information can be transmitted in fewer English words than French, German, Italian, or any other European language. In Germany and Holland especially, it is coming to be a common thing to see telegrams in English, to save expense and ensure precision.

NEW PARK AT HAMPTHEAD.—We understand that a plan has been set on foot by which, if carried into effect, the inhabitants of Marylebone, Kilburn, Belsize, Camden Town, Haverstock-hill, and St. John's Wood, will be greatly benefitted. It was proposed in a vestry-meeting at Hampstead the other day, to take on lease, at a moderate rental, with option of purchase, an area of between fifty and sixty acres in the neighbourhood of Finchley-road. It is expected that the new lord of the manor, Sir John Mayson Wilson, will not be indisposed to meet the wishes of the inhabitants of Hampstead thus far, especially if, as very probable, the parish of Marylebone should unite with that of Hampstead, and both with the Metropolitan Board of Works, in forwarding the success of the scheme.

CONSTANCE HASTINGS.

CONSTANCE HASTINGS was an orphan, and, in the world's judgment at least, an heiress. Her guardian, who was also her maternal uncle, was Captain Hanover Howe, a bluff, but most generous and hearty gentleman. He had made a fine fortune by following the sea in his early life; and soon after he had retired to a quiet suburb, to enjoy it; had fallen heir to another fortune, by which means he was reputed to be a millionaire. Indeed he used to say, himself, that he was uncomfortably well off, since it was more than he cared to do to attend properly to the investment of his money.

His niece Constance was his sole living relative. She was now just nineteen years old, and a singularly beautiful and discreet creature. She was tall and slight, with a lithe graceful figure, a beautifully-shaped head, and features classic and reposeful. She had had every advantage of culture and training, and her manners were ordinarily those of an elegant and self-possessed woman; but at times, when any slight excitement startled her into an unusual demonstration of feeling, you saw that somewhere in her nature was hidden a sensibility, a latent power to enjoy or suffer, such as few women possess.

Captain Hanover knew this, but at the time of which I write I doubt if another person living had ever observed it. To the world she was simply a quiet, self-contained girl, with a wisdom in the ways of propriety which was beyond her years, and as middle-aged matrons were fond of saying to their giddy young daughters, "above praise." But the time was coming when Constance Hastings' feet should be led to the verge of such a brink as not a rattle-pate among them would have dared for an instant to contemplate. And if her fate were not to fall, to whom would she owe it—herself, or her good angel?

Captain Hanover, as I have intimated, had an elegant country-seat a few miles out of town. A railroad gave him easy access to the city; there was also a fine drive into town, and in summer weather, if the captain chose, he could come down in his yacht. He therefore spent most of his year in the country, because he liked it best, while for Constance's sake he nevertheless frequently engaged a suite of rooms at a hotel for some weeks during the opera season.

Thus far Captain Hanover had watched her growing up with feelings of unalloyed delight and satisfaction. She was so beautiful, so amiable, so discreet, so every way exactly what he would have her, that he used to sit in his easy-chair and watch her as she, all unconscious of his scrutiny, moved about among her birds and flowers, or sitting at the piano, played, just to keep herself in practice, some old love song, or better still for him, some ballad with the crisp salt air blowing through it, or the long swell of troubled seas tossing its turbulent rhythm.

But now that Constance was fairly launched upon the treacherous sea of social life, the captain found that another feeling besides complacency was assail-

ing him. He went out to evening parties for her sake, for which three years ago he would have declared himself entirely too old; and as he nightly saw how the male moths of society fluttered about her, taking her hand for the dance, leaning over her lovely shoulders to whisper some meaningless nothing in her ear, wrapping her perhaps in her burnous with an air of tenderness which seemed to his honest heart almost an insult, coming from such a source as it did, he not unfrequently broke out in a cold perspiration of fear.

"These shallow, shattered creatures," he said, "dare to think of my Constance for a wife. Why, I know them every one. There isn't a man among them. They are mere hollow reeds, with not so much as a pith in them to give them any strength on which a woman might lean in a time of trouble or of danger. And yet my Constance don't know it. How should she, happy, innocent child? And what is worse, she never would believe it if she were told."

And thus the honest old salt felt what at some time in her life every true mother feels, but which more seldom perhaps a father experiences—the solemn weight it is to guide aright a young and innocent soul through the breakers of life.

"People marry too early," speculated the old man. "what is Constance but a baby? And yet she may to-day or to-morrow go to a thing, in the innocence of her guileless heart, for which she will live to sorrow through unnumbered years. And there's no reprieve. A three-years' voyage may prove to be a bad chance, but it has an end. Not so a marriage. I must look out for her, if it leads me a wild-goose chase through all the balls and parties of the season."

It was at Madam Jerome's grand ball that Constance's feet first became entangled in the mazy web of destiny. She had been dancing, interminably it seemed to her, when someone presented Mr. Gerald Montaigne. The name of Montaigne was entirely new to her, and looking up a little languidly, she perceived a dark, handsome face, an elegant figure, and met the glance of a discerning and admiring eye.

Mr. Montaigne was an uncommon man. One's first impression of him was that he united in a singular degree all those shining advantages which go to make a successful man of the world. He was in person so handsome as to be distinguished, in that dark and debonaire style which touches soonest the fancy of a sentimental woman. He was wealthy, and affected a princely style of living; he was possessed of a brilliant and cultivated intellect, which had won him acknowledgment in the highest ranks of literature; and, more to the purpose than all the rest, he was a man of inflexible will and purpose: the strength of iron lay under the brightness of the polished steel, and every man or woman who had been brought into intimate relations with him had lived to learn that there were crises in which the shining charm vanished, and the crushing, relentless strength alone remained. The reason why is evident. The foundation of all such nature is selfishness, and selfishness, refine its seeming as you may, is of its deepest nature coarse, earthly, material, devilish.

And this was the man who, standing apart in the giddy throng, had singled out Constance Hastings from all her peers, and had chosen to ask an introduction to her. The frank yet innocent way in which she had met him confirmed his impression of her, and as they walked up and down the dim conservatory, he experienced just that charm in her guileless, innocent, trustful presence which he had promised himself.

"She is my counterpart," he said to himself. "She is as pure as a snowflake, as trustful as a dove. If she loved a man, she would never question him; if she ever suffered through him, she would not rebel. I shall make her my wife."

But outwardly his manner was as suave and deferential as though he had not thus inwardly doomed her to be his slave for life.

As they came out of the conservatory, they encountered Captain Hanover Howe, with an anxious look upon his face, and a gentleman who was a stranger to Constance upon his arm.

"Ah! here she is," exclaimed the captain. "Constance, my blossom, this is Charles Doreux; the son of my old friend, Will Doreux, of whom you have heard me speak so often. I've been looking for you an hour, child. Where have you been?"

She replied, smiling:

"For the last fifteen minutes I have been in the conservatory with Mr. Montaigne. Uncle, allow me to introduce to yourself and your friend, Mr. Montaigne. My uncle, Captain Howe, Mr. Montaigne."

Captain Hanover saw that Constance was well pleased with this stranger, therefore he became at once an object of interest.

Mr. Montaigne, too, interpreted the situation at a glance. Till this moment he had known nothing about Constance, except that which his own penetration had made him aware of. Now, with that rare

insight which constituted his chief intellectual distinction, he saw that this man was his rival.

He lingered for a moment to take his measure, and then, as Miss Hastings excused herself and accepted Mr. Devereux's hand for a waltz, withdrew to a quiet corner. As the evening was already far spent, he foresaw that it was Mr. Devereux who would hand Constance to the carriage. For him, therefore, the business of the occasion was over.

He had judged rightly that Captain Hanover was anxious that Constance should marry the son of his old friend. His choice was, moreover, a wise and worthy one, for while Charles Devereux was not a man of fortune, he was entering upon a successful professional career, and was, besides, a man of thorough good sense and kind feeling. He was handsome, and in manner distinguished by a quiet self-possession which made it perfectly evident that he was at home in the best circles.

When Captain Howe asked him: "Well, Charlie, how were you pleased with her?" he replied, very quietly, yet with fully as much enthusiasm as his admiration warranted, "Miss Hastings is certainly very handsome."

"But, Charles," said the old man, rather testily, "can you say no more than that for her? Why, her beauty is the last thing I counted upon to please you. But you don't know my Constance yet."

Mr. Devereux smiled. "I may be pardoned that," he said, "since a single waltz at the close of a gay evening is hardly a sufficient opportunity for becoming thoroughly acquainted with any woman of character and intelligence."

"You are right, Charles, you are right; but you must see more of her. To tell you the truth, Charles, when I see all these worthless men of society about her, men who have nothing whatever to recommend them but a little money, and not tact enough to keep that when it is once fully in their own control, I feel anxious that she should have a thorough knowledge of one sensible man by whom to judge the sex. Come to see us as often as you can, Charles; you will always be welcome."

Mr. Devereux did call, but Miss Hastings, while she treated him politely for her uncle's sake, found no charm in his conversation. He seemed to her ordinary and commonplace, in contrast with Mr. Montaigne, who now and then favoured her with his company.

"Constance," said Captain Howe to his niece, "if I were in your place, I'd never allow that man to visit me again as a friend. He is dangerous."

"Dangerous?" said Constance, "Mr. Montaigne dangerous? I cannot conceive such a thing. He is fascinating, I allow, but then a woman must have little respect for herself who can never trust herself in the society of a fascinating man."

"But, Constance, you know so little of men. Now I can see that this man looks upon all women with a selfish eye as to how far they can be made to minister to his own delight. He degrades the whole sex by his estimate of them, and if I were a woman, I would make him feel that there was at least one who could hold herself infinitely above his belittling conceptions of her sex."

"Why, uncle," said Constance, with slowly opening eyes, "I am amazed that you can so misjudge Mr. Montaigne. I always feel my own insignificance in his presence, just because his estimate of womanly perfections is so high. Why, it is only yesterday that he said to me, that the woman whom he could love must be angelic in her capacity for unselfish love and self-sacrificing devotion."

"Humph!" said Captain Howe; "he's frank, at least. It is all very well to talk about devotion in woman, but I'll be hanged if I'm going to have my niece offered up as a sacrifice on the altar of his pride. Constance, if you take my advice, you'll have nothing whatever to do with the man."

"Why, uncle, I'm amazed. I thought you could not fail to be pleased with Mr. Montaigne. You have talked to me so much about being surrounded by young men, mere mortals, men of no character or experience. And here is Mr. Montaigne, everything you could desire in age, character, position, experience, and yet you go on about him worse than about any fast youth of them all. I must think you are difficult to please, uncle."

"No, Constance, my darling. I know I've got to part with you some time; but I do want to see you married to a man whom I can trust. Now there's Charles Devereux. He's just the man to make you happy, Constance."

Miss Hastings' brow darkened.

"Uncle," she said, "it is useless to talk of Mr. Devereux. He is a gentleman, no doubt, and as such I respect him; but he could never win my heart. He has not one quality which would attract me."

Captain Hanover groaned inwardly.

"Well, Constance," he said, "remember that I've warned you."

He went out of the room leaving Constance in a state of utter bewilderment. Before she had fairly recovered from her stupefaction the bell rang, and Mr. Montaigne was announced. She rose to meet him with a listless, preoccupied air that was very different from her usual cordial manner. He noticed it, and having met Captain Howe at the corner, and received from him a scowl instead of the greeting which a gentleman usually bestows upon his friend, he at once felt a glimmering of the truth.

"Miss Constance," he said, "you look sad to-day. I hope it is no serious grief which has shadowed your brow."

She smiled at once.

"I am so weak," she said, her voice faltering like a penitent's, "I give way to the first discouragement. If a friend disagrees with me in opinion, it saddens me for a whole day."

He took her hand and smiled.

"It is not your weakness," he said, "which affects you, but your unprotected condition. Your uncle loves you after his own fashion, but it requires no oracular insight to see that he does not and cannot sympathize with you. You feel that want of masculine protection and guardianship which every true woman must feel."

Constance was looking down. Mr. Montaigne felt that he should never have a better opportunity.

"Constance," he said, "from the first moment that I saw you, I chose you to be my wife. I have never for a moment doubted the wisdom of that choice. I love you. I believe that I can make you happy. I know that you are utterly fitted to my needs. Will you accept my hand—will you be my wife?"

She looked up, her whole face radiant. Then suddenly dropping her glance again, she said:

"I dare not promise you. My uncle would disapprove, and he is so good to me I cannot break his heart."

"Constance," said Mr. Montaigne, "does your uncle understand you? Can he make you happy?"

"I have been very happy with him," she faltered, "till—till recently."

"And he would like you to marry Mr. Devereux?"

She looked up in sudden surprise.

"He has never exactly said so," she replied.

"It is useless to strive to conceal it from me. I feel all things concerning you by intuition. Constance, can you marry that man?"

"Never," she replied, with energy.

"Constance, will you marry me?"

She looked up into his eyes, and said, firmly:

"I will."

He put his arm around her and quietly kissed her, and then, drawing a curious ruby ring from his finger, and placing it upon her own, he said:

"Let this ring be the pledge of our troth. You shall have diamonds by-and-bye, all you will of them, but this ruby is heart's blood. Between you and me, it will mean something more than diamonds could."

Constance looked up timidly into his face, and on that instant seemed to get some faint insight into the iron nature of the man, and to feel the choking pressure upon her heart of a stern reality; but in the next moment Mr. Montaigne became instantly the dignified, smiling and self-possessed man of the world—a man to be admired and respected, certainly; and what a woman admires and respects shall she not also love?

Yet that evening, when she carried the matter, as she felt in duty bound, to her Uncle Hanover, and saw the sadness which settled on his brow, the look of deep pain in his honest eyes, strange to say, the misgiving which had haunted her through the long hours of the afternoon vanished altogether. Mr. Montaigne's logic sprang to her lips, and she said, gently, to her uncle, yet with a womanly firmness which gave him all the keener anguish because it was so loyal and so true:

"Uncle, you love me dearly, as I too love you; but you do not quite understand me, I think. You do not know the pure, unselfish pleasure it would be to me to devote myself to one who was worthy of my love, and would guide my steps aright through the mazes of life. You, dear uncle, have spoiled me through your too great fondness. Mr. Montaigne will correct that error, and make me the noble woman you, I am sure, would wish you to become."

She looked up into his face with a pleased, exultant look, while Captain Hanover groaned inwardly. But what could he do? For days and weeks he turned the matter over constantly in his mind, but he could find no remedy. To some souls the experiences of life are a red-hot crucible, through which only the gold of the spirit may be truly refined; but woe to fathers and mothers, lovers and friends, when they see the best beloved of their hearts going down into the flames.

Captain Hanover, in one of his fits of desperation, went to Mr. Montaigne.

"Sir," he said, resolutely, "I have come to tell you that you can never marry my niece with my consent."

"So long as I have the consent of the lady herself," replied Mr. Montaigne, with a cool defiance in his tones, "it matters very little what else is wanting."

"But I will disinheritor her. She shall never touch a penny of my fortune."

"As you please about that. I am neither a beggar nor a fortune-hunter."

The captain knew that this was true. He found himself powerless. The only result of this interference was that Mr. Montaigne hurried on the wedding preparations, and in six weeks Constance was his bride.

The wedding was a brilliant one, for Captain Hanover could not have his darling married as if she were the daughter of a poor man; and though he made no settlement upon her, gloomily saying that he would keep the money in his own possession till the poor child needed it, that it might by no possibility get into that bad man's keeping, everybody felt that she was as sure of her fortune as though it were already transferred to her account at the bank.

But nothing happens as we expect in this world. Constance's honeymoon was scarcely over, when her uncle suddenly died. Heart disease, the physicians called it. In reality it was heart-break. His will, made years before his death, gave all to Constance. But she, poor thing, overcome with her sudden anguish, what should she do with it? It was given over without reserve into Mr. Montaigne's keeping, and Constance became in reality utterly dependent upon his generosity.

Mr. Montaigne had been for some weeks an ardent lover. There was a strength that was almost fierceness in his passions; his affectional nature was torpid, inert. It was in this direction that Constance's eyes were first opened to a sense of imperfection in her idol. Himself, and not herself, she found was ever the theme of his purpose.

It was not in the nature of a pure and spiritually-minded woman like Constance not to rebel, at least in secret, against this iron rule of selfishness. When once the true nature of the man was revealed to her, she saw distinctly that there could never be harmony, union, sympathy between them. Then indeed she bewailed her own blindness.

"Oh, my poor uncle!" she cried, "you would have saved me, and died because you could not, and I was too infatuated to heed you! Oh, life, what a mockery! Oh, death, what a welcome reprieve!"

Rebellion, even in secret, was not what Mr. Montaigne had counted upon in a wife. He was bent upon subduing it, but at the same time he was far too proud to let the world know that his rose had concealed a thorn. Still, outwardly, his wife was the recipient of his entire devotion. She was dressed sumptuously, her house—his house rather—was a fairy abode for splendour. Servants waited upon her lightest call, and her equipages were envied. Yet what was it all but vanity and vexation of spirit to Constance, so long as in place of a love she had found a tyrant. Her woman's spirit chafed, her woman's heart ached. She envied the wife of the poorest tradesman, who in her humble home was blest with the love of her chosen husband.

If children had come to Constance she might have meekly borne for their sakes all the anguish and ignominy of her lot, and so have added another to the thousands of nameless martyrs who have worn their lives away fretting against the bars of a gilded cage. But none came. There was no being in the world upon whose love she could safely count; and as the weary months and years passed on, she grew to feel that this secret grief which preyed upon her heart would drive her mad. The slow rusting of her chains into her very flesh and bones made her seem a hideous spectacle unto herself.

"I am as loathsome," she said, "as the slave in the harem, with the additional ignominy that while the poor slave lives a secluded life and gives herself up to what she believes to be her duty, I feel my shame, and yet am forced to flaunt it in the eyes of the world."

Constance possessed a tender heart and quick sympathies, and by a natural process the grief which her own sorrow occasioned her found a natural outlet in ministering to the woes of others. His will had ceased to influence her, but when he found that he could no longer command her obedience, he did not hesitate to cut off her supplies of money. She had never for a day had control of her own fortune; she was therefore entirely dependent upon his will. It was this circumstance which aroused in her the first purpose of open resistance.

"I will know," she said to herself, "if I am thus to be despoiled of everything which might make life bearable. I will consult a lawyer forthwith."

The first step necessary to this result was to make choice of her legal adviser. She knew that Charles Devereux was practising law with great success. He was a friend of her uncle; he had known all the circumstances of his life and death. He must, she thought, take a livelier interest in her welfare than any other professional man. To his office, therefore, she drove straightway.

The six years which had passed since their introduction on the night of Madame Jerome's great party had left their changes on both of them. Mr. Devereux seemed to her, as she opened the door and confronted him, a grave middle-aged man, with the slightly absorbed air of a professional man in his own office, with the traces certainly of a handsome youth still remaining in both face and figure, but with gray hairs showing unmistakably in his chestnut hair, and indubitable wrinkles about the corners of his eyes. So much the better. He was a far safer adviser for a married woman in trouble, than a younger man would be.

He, on his part, was also slightly surprised at the change in Mrs. Montaigne. He had been present at her wedding. She had seemed to him then a fair and lovely creature, gifted indeed with beauty and grace. She was too placid, too self-possessed for his tastes, and he had thought at the time that Mr. Montaigne had chosen precisely the right woman to satisfy his pride and as well to yield herself without reserve to his rather inflexible will.

Rising with ceremonious politeness, he placed a chair for her, and inquired with deep interest concerning her health and happiness.

"Mr. Devereux," she said, very sweetly, though not without emotion, "I have come to consult you in a business matter, which is of such delicacy that I could not take it to any other than an old friend who understood my relations with my uncle, and the circumstances of my marriage. I trust you will deal with me not altogether professionally, but in some sense as one who has a stronger claim upon you than a purely professional one; not to be sure from any right of my own to ask the favour, but simply out of regard for my dear Uncle Hanover."

Mr. Devereux, replied, with unmistakable sincerity:

"It will give me very great pleasure, madam. I trust you are in no serious legal difficulty."

Mrs. Montaigne explained to him her dilemma concerning the property of her late uncle.

"Am I to understand," said Mr. Devereux, "that of all that immense fortune, which should be entirely and exclusively yours, you have no control whatever?"

"Literally, sir, I cannot command a pound. My husband gives me whatever sum he chooses, for my own expenses, and beyond that I am absolutely penniless. During the time of my bereavement, he quietly took possession of my fortune, and I have never even known accurately how much money I did inherit."

Mr. Devereux sat for some minutes silent, apparently absorbed in deep thought. At length he said to her, in a quiet and very gentle manner:

"You probably understand, Mrs. Montaigne, that the relations between a client and her legal adviser must of necessity be somewhat confidential. You will, therefore, pardon me, if I inquire whether you have ever expostulated with Mr. Montaigne concerning his course in this matter, and what disposition he has manifested concerning it?"

Constance's face was crimson in an instant.

"I fear," she said, "that you do not understand Mr. Montaigne's character."

The tone of her reply revealed far more than the words, and Mr. Devereux began to feel a lively interest in his fair client.

"Your case is certainly peculiar," he said, "and while I should prefer not to advance a deliberate opinion in detail without some farther study of it, it is certainly safe enough to remind you that you cannot probably obtain possession of the property, which is undoubtedly your own, without due process of law. And that would be a permanent separation. Are you prepared to go to that length?"

This view of the case was not altogether novel to Constance, yet presented thus, in a manner abruptly, by a person with whom she was only slightly acquainted, she shrank from it with visible pain.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "I should not dare propose such a thing to Mr. Montaigne. I think I should be made to feel the weight of his vengeance all the days of my life."

Mr. Devereux remained in deep thought for a few minutes. At last he said:

"Our present institutions in regard to marriage do certainly bear somewhat heavily upon women. If you think it proper, I might make a cautious investigation concerning the manner in which your property is invested, which investigation might lead to useful discoveries."

"I certainly should be glad to have you pursue such inquiries," said Constance. "I came here feeling that I was prepared for any thing, however desperate, which should lead to some change in my present life. But I find, after all, that I shrink, as any woman must, from a single-handed quarrel with the whole world, for that is what it amounts to when any woman tries to free herself from the constraint which an ill-advised marriage imposes upon her. Men make the laws, and of course they make them in their own interests. Oh, Mr. Devereux, thank heaven that you are a man."

"Mrs. Montaigne," he said, "do not, even for a moment, despise the glory of your sex. If you are overmatched by brute force, remember that women have always a spiritual strength in reserve, which, if they will rely upon it, will overcome at length the mightiest material obstacles. Cherish faith and patience, and they will bring you off conqueror at last."

He paused for a moment, and then looking at her with a tenderness which was like that of a brother, he added:

"There are old memories between us which make us, even though comparative strangers, more nearly allied than everyday friends. Let me assure you, then, that I shall be true to those memories, and so far as it lies in my power, I will be to you in the stead of that tried and true friend whom you have lost."

She looked up to him with eyes beaming gratitude. Expressions of any true and fervent emotion were so strange to her life, that they fell like dew from heaven upon her parched and thirsty heart. Tears trembled in her eyes, and she could scarcely trust her voice to answer.

"You may never know, Mr. Devereux, how much happiness this interview has given me, or how much stronger I feel for it to bear the heavy burdens of my life, but I cannot think that such friendship will lose its reward. I thank you for your goodness, and I trust you implicitly."

In a week she received a note from Mr. Devereux, requesting her to call again at his office. In that interview she learned, what she had before vaguely suspected, that Mr. Montaigne had been unsuccessful in a variety of ways, so that his fortune was materially diminished.

"If you have the slightest idea of procuring a separation from Mr. Montaigne," said Mr. Devereux, "and reclaiming your own property, I think you cannot be a moment too soon about it. He is growing desperate from his losses, and it is impossible to predict what may occur even in six months' time."

"Let us first try what can be done by peaceable means," she said. "If he resists this, and forces me to require a separation, I have better grounds for justification than if I take the serious step without asking for justice."

"That is very wisely said," replied Mr. Devereux. "Take courage, Mrs. Montaigne. You will weather the storm yet."

After a few minutes farther conversation, Mrs. Montaigne left the office. Passing out upon the street, she encountered her husband. He looked at her for an instant in surprise, and then glancing at the door-plate, "C. Devereux, Attorney-at-Law," his brow lowered and his eye grew fierce.

"May I inquire, madam," he asked, "what business brings you to this place?"

She trembled violently for a moment, but answered, with a tolerably firm voice:

"Mr. Devereux is my legal adviser, and you will probably learn from him what my business here is, and that before very long."

Mr. Montaigne was startled for an instant, and taking advantage of his hesitation, she entered her carriage and drove away.

She went directly home, and thither within an hour her husband followed her. Constance had spent that hour in that kind of meditation which comes to a woman when she suddenly finds the entire foundation of her life undermined, and is conscious that she is on the eve of an overthrow of which the issue, as well things thereafter is uncertain. When she heard her husband's step in the hall, the sound to her was like the tramp of doom, and she quaked with such a deadly fear as only women know to whom in the place of love, and tenderness and protection comes only bitterness, and persecution and malice.

Mr. Montaigne came straight to her room.

"So, madam," he said, "it seems you are in the habit of making clandestine visits to your old admirer. I should like to know how long this state of things has continued?"

"Mr. Devereux was never an admirer of mine," she answered, "neither have I ever visited him clandestinely. Twice, in open day, in my own carriage, I have been to his office upon business."

Mr. Montaigne had evidently begun to feel already the nervous strain and pressure which makes the

days and nights of an unsuccessful man miserable. The dignity and elegance of manner which distinguished him in society had always suffered a depreciation when he had been alone with his wife, but on the present occasion he became brutal.

"Business!" he repeated, scornfully; "what honourable business can a married woman have with an unmarried man like Charles Devereux?"

He was going on wrathfully, but she interrupted him.

"When a married woman has brought to her husband," she said, "a very considerable fortune, and finds herself utterly deprived of the use of it—it is very natural that she should seek to know if there are any legal means of redress."

Then, indeed, the storm burst upon her. For three minutes Mr. Montaigne indulged himself in accusation, invective and wholesale defamation of character which would have done credit to a fish-monger. Then, curbing himself with one strong effort, he concluded, in a single sentence:

"But I am master of this house, and you shall see that I will be obeyed."

He seated himself at her writing desk, and hastily drew up the form of an oath, or obligation, by which she was to bind herself in the most solemn manner to renounce at once and for ever all acquaintance with Charles Devereux, to refrain from all questioning concerning her husband's business affairs, and to conduct herself hereafter, in all respects, as becomes a modest woman and a true wife."

Then turning to her, he said:

"Constance, you have compromised yourself in a manner which, if it were made public, would entail upon me pain and dishonour, and upon you the ignominy of a separation, with all its consequences of calumny and disgrace. That you have disappointed me, and long ago failed to retain my affection, you very well know; but I have still sufficient respect for you to believe that you do not care to take the position of an abandoned woman before the world. At least, since you bear my name, I do not choose to have you pursue so fatal a course. You will sign this document, madam, and then I assure you, upon my honour as a man, that while you live up to it, all will be well with you. But if you ever fail to do so, it would be better for you that you had never been born."

Constance trembled, for she knew the nature of the man. Strive against it as she might, a mortal fear of him oppressed her.

"Madam, I repeat it, you must sign that paper, and at once."

She approached the writing-desk, and took the pen in her hand. He stood over her, watching with glowing, fiery eye for the first symptom of resistance to his will. Suddenly—she could never tell how or why—she turned her head, and there in the doorway of her room she saw—was it a vision? or was it in some spiritual sense a reality?—the erect form and honest, tender, and pitiful face of Captain Hanover Howe.

Her brain swam, and she fell to the floor in a swoon.

Mr. Montaigne was baffled, and ringing the bell for her maid, left the room.

By the time the woman entered, Constance's senses were returning.

"I met Mr. Montaigne in the hall," said her maid, Hortense, "and he bade me tell you he should be back in an hour."

Constance sat up, and pressing her hand to her head, strove to comprehend in some feeble way the issue before her. When once she was able to set the facts in array, she dismissed the maid, and gave herself up to the contemplation of her probable fate, and the answer which she felt it would be necessary to have ready for her husband when he returned. After that vision, she felt that she should never be able to sign the paper. If she refused, what would be the result?

But the hour passed, and Mr. Montaigne did not return. Summoning a servant, she learned that he had mounted a horse and ridden away.

"He had a desperate wild look about his eyes, ma'am," said the man, "and Black Dick be in a mad humour as well. It's lucky if no harm befalls the two of them."

While they spoke, the sound of clattering hoofs came up from the courtyard, and the servant, at his mistress' bidding, went down to see what it meant. Black Dick had come home without a rider, but with foam-flecked sides, and an eye that glowed like a forge-fire. Servants were dispatched in every direction, and just as the sun set they brought home the object of their quest—the lifeless body of Gerald Montaigne.

The Angel of Doom had cut the tangled skein of Constance Hastings' destiny, but to how many women out of such crises is evolved a fate which brings upon them the scorn and condemnation of the world.

Mr. Devereux continued to be her legal adviser. He succeeded, in time, in restoring to her the greater part of her inheritance, and when the year of her mourning had expired, she gave him her hand in marriage. And thereafter the web of her life ran smoothly; sons and daughters came to her, and her old age was crowned with peace.

G. L. A.

A SINGULAR DECEPTION.

It was a small, unpretentious house, with a millinery shop. Over the door was the simple sign: "Rachel Herrick, Milliner."

She was a small woman, with a sad, pale face and mild blue eyes. Her features bore the impress of the great sorrow which had fallen upon her life; but this sorrow had not impaired her energies; on the contrary, it seemed to have developed them with a force which had astonished all her friends. They had never given her credit for so much tact, judgment, and unwearying perseverance.

At twenty she had become the wife of Edward Herrick, a young printer—a man of more than ordinary mental capacity, and of great personal comeliness. It was a love-match, and they were very happy together. One child was born to them, a boy, who was given his father's name.

Rachel, before her marriage, had been a milliner, supporting herself and father by the willing labour of her hands. At her husband's request, after her marriage she gave up her occupation, and her father went to live with them in the little tenement her husband rented and furnished. It was a very happy household; but, after a while, the demon of discontent found entrance into their humble dwelling. Only in the breast of Edward Herrick, however, did this evil spirit find a lodgment. It was not a very serious evil, yet still it was an evil, and produced sad results, as the sequel will show.

Edward Herrick was strongly afflicted with that desire, so inherent in the human breast, to become rich. It was his only failing, but, like a drop of ink in a glass of water, it discoloured all his good qualities. He could not make money fast enough to please him; he was not satisfied with the slow, sure steps that ultimately lead to fortune. He was constantly puzzling his brains to devise some scheme by which he might make money faster. This thought tormented him day and night.

In the third year of their marriage he received a proposal to go to Liverpool for double the wages he was then receiving. It was a temptation he could not resist. He broached the subject to Rachel. She saw his heart was set upon it, and she let him go. It cost her a struggle, but her anguish was none the less poignant because it was concealed; none the less bitter from the conviction that would force itself upon her mind, that he was only too anxious to leave her—that his greed for gain was stronger than his love for her. But Rachel Herrick was of a mild and gentle disposition; her husband's wish was her law; she ventured no remonstrance, she uttered no reprimands; but did her best, in her own quiet way, to prepare his clothes speedily for the journey.

She was very desolate when he was gone, for her whole soul was bound up in him, but she consoled her sorrow by caressing her child, his image in miniature.

His letters came quite regular at first, and she discovered by the tone of them, though he did not say as much in words, that he was far from satisfied with the success that he had up to that time met with. The change had, evidently, been a mistake, and was not resulting favourably. After a while his correspondence became very irregular—his letters consisting of a few hurriedly-scratched lines, as if he wrote more from a sense of duty than from any other motive; then it ceased altogether. Then came the intelligence that he was dead.

It was a terrible blow to poor Rachel, but she bore up under it bravely. The gentle girl, when the emergency came, proved herself a self-reliant woman. She could not sit down under the burden of her sorrow in an apathy of woe. She had no time for grief; there were wants to be supplied, mouths to be fed. Two human beings were dependent upon her exertions; the extremes of humanity—the doting father, the helpless child.

She dried her tears, and set herself to work. With the little money she had left her she fitted up a millinery establishment. Her housemaid, a faithful Irish girl, accompanied her to her new residence, and was of great assistance to her. She took one apprentice-girl in the shop.

Nobody thought she would succeed, and everybody thought she would have done much better if she had been content to work for wages, as she had done before her marriage, and had not been so ambitious to be her own mistress. But Rachel knew her own business best, as the event proved.

She was a most skilful workwoman, and had the most exquisite taste in trimming, and custom soon flocked to her little shop. The business soon became thriving and profitable, and Rachel was comparatively happy and content. It was only in the silent watches of the night that the recollection of her great sorrow overpowered her, and wet her pillow with bitter, unavailing tears.

Having a spare room, with an eye to economy she let it. She obtained a lodger. He gave his name as Gavin Rintels; and his occupation was that of a writer for the press. He appeared to be about twenty-two, had a keen, intelligent face, with rather aristocratic features, and though very plainly dressed was by no means shabby. Whatever his position in life might be, it was very evident that nature had intended him for a gentleman.

After he became domiciled under her roof, and became acquainted with Rachel, his shyness melted before the mild amiability of this gentle woman, and he told her his little story. It was a singular one. He had never known either his father or mother. He had been placed in an orphan asylum at an early age.

Suddenly the remittances which had all along supported him, and had always come at regular periods, failed, and he was thrown on his own resources. No trace could be discovered of the source from whence these supplies had proceeded. They had always been enclosed in envelopes, addressed to Gavin Rintels; but these envelopes contained money only—no writing to intimate who sent them.

The young man was obliged to relinquish his collegiate course before he had graduated, and earn his own livelihood as best he could. It was a hard struggle for one who had been fostered for so many years and never known a care. He contrived, however, to earn a precarious living by the exercise of his pen.

Rachel Herrick took a strange interest in this singular young man, whose wayward destiny had brought him beneath her roof. He appreciated her sympathy, and fairly revered her, regarding her in the light of a dear elder sister.

Eighteen months after receiving the news of her husband's death Rachel had a strange adventure. Her skill had become so well known that she numbered among her customers some of the wealthy and fashionable. These orders she invariably attended to in person. Returning one day, her attention was attracted by a stylish carriage, in which sat a lady and gentleman. Upon the lady she bestowed but a passing glance, but the gentleman's face caused her heart to palpitate rapidly, and her cheeks to pale. Could she be mistaken? No; those features were too well known to her. This gentleman, sitting at his ease in that luxurious carriage, conversing gaily with the lady by his side, was Edward Herrick, her husband, or else he was his living counterpart!

Whilst she stood rooted to the spot by this strange apparition the carriage swept swiftly by. But Rachel, as has been shown, was a woman of resources. She recovered from her stupor of amazement, and followed rapidly after the carriage. The conviction that Edward Herrick was not dead, but that she had that moment seen him living, took instant possession of her mind. Though why he should have been reported dead, and she should find him alive in such altered circumstances, was a riddle she could not solve.

By dint of great exertion she contrived to keep the carriage in sight until it stopped in front of a handsome mansion. When Rachel arrived, panting and breathless, at the spot, the carriage was empty; the lady and gentleman had entered the house. A servant girl was scrubbing the steps. Rachel paused for a moment to recover her breath, and then began to question her.

"Who lives here?" she asked.

The girl suspended her work and looked up in surprise.

"Mrs. Langton Burhap," she answered; "sure I thought everybody knew that."

Rachel smiled. Mrs. Langton Burhap was a woman of some consequence, it appeared—at least, in the estimation of her servants.

"Was that she who came just now in the carriage?" she questioned next.

Her frank, pleasant face seemed to have won the girl's confidence, for she answered her readily.

"Oh, no, that was her daughter, Miss Sophie."

A rich heiress, undoubtedly; and he had been riding with her, talking to her with a lover's face. Her keen eyes had noticed that. Her heart beat strangely as she put the next question.

"Who was the gentleman that came with Miss Sophie?" she faltered.

"Ah!" cried the servant, with admiration, "he is a gentleman, you may well say that. He's going to marry Miss Sophie—and it's an elegant couple the pair of them'll make. Bedad, I wish her joy of him!"

"But his name? What is his name?" demanded Rachel, impatiently.

"Mr. Harvey Selberstone," replied the girl. Rachel breathed a sigh of relief. It was not the name she expected, yet dreaded to hear. The name was strange to her—could she be mistaken? Strange resemblances had often happened in the world. Might not this be one of them? She could not persuade herself that she was mistaken—her heart told her she had seen Edward Herrick.

"Does he live here?" she asked, quickly. "Oh, no; his house is in St. Mark's Place. You appear to be very anxious about him?" said the girl, curiously, noting Rachel's pale face.

"Yes, yes," answered Rachel, hurriedly; "he put me so much in mind of a once dear friend of mine. Thank you—thank you!"

She turned away and walked down the street. "Crazy, I do believe!" the girl exclaimed, as she resumed her work.

"Harvey Selberstone, and lives in St. Mark's Place," mused Rachel, as she walked rapidly homeward. "I can easily find the house. I will see him, meet him face to face, look in his eye, and see if he can deny me."

Though strangely agitated, for her nerves were all unstrung by this singular occurrence, she contrived to conceal her emotion from her aged father. It was useless to afflict him with the doubts that tortured her own mind. If this was indeed her husband under an assumed name, it was for some purpose that did not redound to his honour or credit. She had lavished upon Edward Herrick her heart's best affections—she had cherished his memory in sorrow and respect; it would be a bitter change to find him living, and have that love and sorrow turn to loathing, if not to hate.

So she kept her own counsel and waited, feverishly it must be confessed, with all the strong self-reliance of her character, for the time which should put an end to all doubts. She knew the fashionable hour for dining, and rightly surmised that she should then find him at home.

She put her work aside at half-past five, dressed herself for the walk, and went to St. Mark's Place. She inquired of a boy who appeared to live in the neighbourhood, where Mr. Selberstone lived, and the house was pointed out to her. It was with trembling limbs and a palpitating heart that she ascended the steps and rang the bell. When the summons was answered by a maid-servant, she asked if Mr. Selberstone was in. On requesting to speak to him, she was shown into the front parlour and desired to wait.

There were two things in this parlour that Rachel noticed particularly as she cast a cursory glance around. The first was a life-size portrait of a middle-aged gentleman, painted in the highest style of the art, over the mantel-piece. Something in the face of this portrait attracted her attention at once. The features appeared strangely familiar to her, and yet she could not tell where she had ever seen them before. The other was, that one of the folding-doors was slightly ajar, and she heard a confused murmur of voices from the adjoining parlour, and the rattling of spoons in glasses. It appeared as if someone there was taking something as an appetizer before dinner.

She had not much time, however, for observation, or to reflect upon the singular situation in which she stood, for she heard a door open, and the servant's voice say:

"A lady to see you in the parlour, sir."

The door closed again, and she heard the servant's steps as she went to some other portion of the house.

Rachel's face was turned full towards the connecting doors, when she observed the one that was ajar open a little farther; there was a smothered exclamation, and the door was pushed to again. Then followed a hurried consultation of voices within; these words alone were audible, though she listened with every sense keenly on the alert:

"You must see her—there is no help for it—but send her about her business at once."

Rachel smiled bitterly to herself.

"He has seen my face before I saw his," she mused; "I cannot, as I had hoped, take him by surprise."

The door that led into the hall opened, and a man came into the parlour—a man of fine appearance, fashionably dressed, and wearing a pleasant smile upon his handsome face—a face she remembered but too well. It drove all preconceived ideas from her brain, for it went straight to her heart and overpowered her. She forgot all in that moment but the great, strong love that nestled in her heart for him. She could only extend her arms, and cry:

"Edward, Edward!"

"Madam!" he exclaimed, in apparent great surprise, and there was no sign of recognition, no look of love, in the dark eyes.

Her arms dropped powerless to her side, and an icy chill passed through her frame.

"Do you not know me?" she faltered.
 "I never saw you before," he answered, unmoved.
 "Am I not your wife? Am I not the mother of your child?" she faltered.

"Are you crazy, my good woman?" he asked, compassionately.
 "Ah!" she cried, quickly. "You prevaricate, you shirk the question—you do not deny it—you cannot deny it! Let me look in your eyes—why do you turn them to the floor? do you fear to meet my glance? Look me in the face, as an honest man should; tell me that you are not Edward Herrick, my husband, and I will believe you!"

He turned upon her deliberately, though his cheek was pale, and his eyes had an uneasy, restless motion, but they met hers for all that.

"I am not Edward Herrick," he returned, calmly; "nor are you my wife."

She gazed upon him in speechless wonder. It was full a minute ere she could command herself to answer him.

"No," she rejoined, with indignant scorn; "you are right; you are not Edward Herrick—he was an honest man; you are a villain!"

"This is strange language, madam, to use to a man in his own house," he replied, but though he endeavoured to make the tones of his voice calm, it was plain that the taunt had stung him.

"Your house?" she answered, scornfully.

"Yes, madam—this is my house, bequeathed to me by my father, Conrad Selberstone."

"Then you assert that your name is Selberstone?"
 "Most certainly I do; Harvey Selberstone."

She fixed her eyes upon him earnestly.

"Do you think you can deceive me?" she asked, with a sad smile. "I, who have studied your features with the eyes of love until every lineament is indelibly impressed upon my heart. Why, were sudden blindness to come upon me, I could pass my hand over your face and know it by the touch. I could fold you in my arms, and distinguish you by the throbbing of your heart. I read the deceit in your eyes. Why are you doing this? For hope of gain—the besetting weakness of your life? Oh, Edward! is my love of so little account to you that you can cast it so lightly from you?"

He was unmoved by this passionate appeal.

"My good woman," he returned, "I am afraid you are not all right here."

He tapped his forehead pleasantly. She laid her finger on his snowy white vest over his heart, and replied:

"I am sure you are not all right there."

He turned away impatiently at this; the first signs of impatience he had exhibited during the interview.

"Come, come, my good woman!" he cried, "are you not satisfied now that you are mistaken? Really I must request you to leave me."

"You bid me go?" she asked, hoarsely.

"I bid you go."

"You deny me, then?"

"I do not know you."

She deliberately opened the door and walked into the hall; there she paused, and looked back towards the parlour door as if expecting to be called. Hearing nothing, she heaved one gentle sigh, opened the street door, and left the house.

A man came through the folding-doors and joined Harvey Selberstone in the parlour. A short, thickest man, with a low forehead and heavy bushy brows. A man of a dogged look and coarse features, which repelled you instinctively. A consequential man, with an undue idea of his own importance pervading every look and action. His words proclaimed that he had been a listener to the dialogue which had just taken place.

"You got out of that nicely, my boy," he exclaimed, loudly.

Everything about this man was extravagant. His clothes were extravagantly cut and of the finest materials. His watch-chain was of immense proportions, with a dozen "charms" suspended to it, and he wore an immense diamond pin in his ruffled shirt-bosom. Yet the innate vulgarity of the man showed beneath his finery—the jackdaw was not concealed by the peacock's plumes.

Harvey Selberstone shook his head thoughtfully.

"I am not out of it yet," he replied.

"No?" cried the other, with a snort of surprise. "Why, she went out of the house as quiet as a lamb—never said a word. Most women, as sure as she was, would have kicked up a precious row, gone into hysterics, fainted, or had a good cry, or threatened all sorts of things."

"She was very quiet," admitted Selberstone; but the shade of anxiety deepened on his brow.

"What are you thinking about—what makes you so glum?" asked his companion. "You are not afraid, are you?"

He asked this last question with a sneer on his dark visage.

"Yes, I am afraid, Jarvis Lamert," returned Selberstone, honestly. "Had she upbraided me, threatened me, I should feel less apprehension than I do now. She was ever mild and gentle, but a change seems to have come over her. That gentleness seems to have concealed a firm decision of character which only waited for an opportunity to display itself. We shall have farther trouble from her."

"It's too late to retreat," cried Jarvis Lamert, sharply. "You must go on to the end now."

"I intend to do so."

This assurance pleased Jarvis Lamert, and the scowl was lifted from his dark features.

"Wisely resolved," he returned; "it were the height of folly now to think of retreating from the stand we have taken—it were ruin to us both, worse than ruin to you, for the law would hold you responsible, whilst I should escape."

Selberstone shivered.

"Understand me," continued Lamert, observing his emotion with a grim smile; "I do not say this to threaten you; but only to have you thoroughly understand how we are situated. What can this woman, poor and unaided, accomplish against us? What proofs can she bring to controvert the story we can tell? Can she prove that you are not Harvey Selberstone? No. If she asserts that you are Edward Herrick, we can produce a physician's certificate of his death in Liverpool, nineteen months ago. Pahaw! I do not see the least cause for fear."

A bell sounded.

"There's our dinner ready. I hope this little affair has not spoiled your appetite."

"Oh, no," answered Selberstone.

Harvey Selberstone, as he called himself, was right; they had not done with Rachel Herrick yet. She was fully satisfied in her own mind that Edward Herrick and Harvey Selberstone were one and the same person. Though she could scarcely comprehend why he should have caused himself to be reported dead. Yet she understood that he was engaged in some nefarious scheme, under an assumed name. She resolved to put him to another and more conclusive test. She resolved to make him acknowledge her, and then, if possible, prevail upon him to relinquish the fraud in which he was engaged.

The next day she dressed her little boy in his best attire, and taking Gavin Rintels as a protection with her—for the other voice she had heard on her previous visit assured her that Herrick had an associate in his scheme, and most probably the instigator of it—she went at the same hour to the house in St. Mark's place.

She was admitted without cavil. Evidently they had not expected her again so soon, or orders would have been left with the servant to refuse her admittance. She was told that Mr. Selberstone was in his chamber, and was shown into the parlour as before. Gavin Rintels followed her, leading the little boy by the hand. The moment his eyes fell upon the portrait over the mantelpiece, he became strangely agitated.

"Great heavens!" he exclaimed, "but this is very singular."

"What is singular?" asked Rachel, in surprise.
 "That picture; it is the portrait of my unknown benefactor. I never saw him but twice, and then when I was quite a lad, but I remember the face distinctly. That is the man who befriended and educated me. It may be a foolish fancy, Rachel, but I firmly believe that is the portrait of my father."

Rachel glanced in silent astonishment from the portrait to the agitated features of her young friend.

"It is not a foolish fancy at all," she answered, "for there is a strong resemblance between you. Surely Providence must have inspired me with the idea of bringing you hither. This is something very unexpected; perhaps the solution of the mystery of your life is at hand."

"Let us hope so," returned Gavin, fervently.

Though she was not aware of it, Gavin's presence secured her another meeting with Harvey Selberstone. The servant announced to him that a gentleman and lady wished to see him. Had he been told it was a lady alone, he would have suspected at once that it was Rachel, and would not have seen her. His mentor, Jarvis Lamert, was absent, and so, unconscious of his peril, he came lightly down the stairs and entered the parlour. He looked very blank when he found himself again confronted by Rachel.

"You here?" he exclaimed. "What brings you here again?"

"You have disowned your wife," answered Rachel; "I wished to see if you would also disown your child."

She put the little boy forward, who extended his little arms, exclaiming:

"Papa! Papa!"

He had been told that he was going to see his father, and he had not forgotten it. Though the husband had been obdurate, the father yielded. Har-

vey Selberstone sank upon his knees, caught the child in his arms, and covered him with kisses.

"My boy—my boy!" he cried, passionately.

Like a true woman, she forgave him then and there for the great wrong he had practised upon her.

"Edward," she said, "come home with us, and forget this glittering cheat."

He arose to his feet with a shudder.

"Oh, I cannot—I cannot!" he moaned.

"Why can you not?" she demanded.

"I will tell you why he cannot," cried a loud, harsh voice.

Absorbed in their emotions, they had not perceived the entrance of Jarvis Lamert, who stood regarding them with a sardonic smile on his coarse features. Gavin Rintels sat on a sofa in the corner of the apartment keenly observant, but unobserved himself. He felt strangely interested in the little drama that was transpiring before him.

"And why can he not?" said Rachel, turning her resolute face unflinchingly to this dark, scowling man.

"I will tell you why," he answered, in that dominating tone so peculiar to him. "In the first place I would not let him. In the next, if that isn't sufficient, he does not wish to go himself."

Rachel turned to her husband.

"Does this man speak for you?" she asked.

The wretched man sank into a chair and buried his face in his hands. Jarvis Lamert surveyed him with a triumphant smile.

"Somebody ought to speak for him," he said, "for it is very evident that he cannot speak for himself."

"This man is my husband, sir," answered Rachel, with a quiet dignity. "He has admitted it."

"More fool he," replied Lamert, rudely.

"And his right name is Edward Herrick," continued Rachel.

"That I deny," returned Lamert, quickly. "You think you have got a strong case, don't you? See how soon I'll undeceive you. This gentleman's name is Harvey Selberstone, the only son and heir of Conrad Selberstone. He has been known under the name of Edward Herrick—true. Oh, don't fancy that we intend to deny it. Why, I am going to tell you. I was Mr. Selberstone's manager for years. He was rich. He fell in love with a poor girl and married her. His relatives thought he had disgraced himself by marrying beneath him. They would not associate with his wife; turned up their noses at her, politely speaking—poisoned his mind against her in every shape, and eventually succeeded in making him believe that she was an adventuress, who had married him for his money. He cast her off the first year of their marriage, and she gave birth to a son, left her husband her forgiveness in a letter, and died—literally of a broken heart. When it was too late, as generally happens, he became satisfied that he had wronged her, and took charge of the boy. But he could not bear the sight of the infant; he had a morbid feeling that child would grow up to be an avenger of his mother's wrongs on the person of his own father. It was one of those insane ideas that get into a man's head, and sticks there in spite of reason or sense. He kept it until his dying day. The child was brought up under an assumed name—Edward Herrick—and was never to be told his true name until after his father's death. Conrad Selberstone died just two years ago. I was named his executor. He willed everything to his son. I was directed to find him, and put him in possession of his property. I have done so. There he is—Edward Herrick, otherwise Harvey Selberstone."

"Whatever his true name may be," answered Rachel, who had listened in wonder to the story which came so fluently from Jarvis Lamert's lips, "he is my husband—I have my certificate to prove it."

"Bah! not worth the paper it is written on," returned Lamert, contemptuously. "He married you under an assumed name—we can get a divorce without any trouble whatever. Besides, how are you going to prove that he is Edward Herrick, in the face of his reported death?"

Rachel could make no reply. She could not understand why Edward Herrick should remain silent, and allow her to be repudiated by proxy. This man must have some strange power over him. But the question was answered, and from an unexpected quarter. Gavin Rintels arose and stepped forward.

"Excuse me, sir," he said, quietly, "but it appears to me that you are jumping too rapidly at your conclusions. If, as you say, Harvey Selberstone was brought up under the name of Edward Herrick, and we cannot prove, in the face of his reported death, that Edward Herrick is alive, how are you going to prove that Harvey Selberstone is alive, and that this is he?"

Mr. Jarvis Lamert was rather staggered by this plain question, but he had his wits about him, and rallied in a moment.

"We have proved it, young gentleman," he re-



[FROM THE DEAD.]

joined, pompously; "and that is sufficient. Possession is nine points of the law, you know."

"I do not know much about the law," answered Gavin, with a smile.

"Ah! I thought not."

"Will you permit me one more question?"

"Oh, certainly; though I really do not see what you have to do with the matter."

"I may have more than appears at first sight," replied Gavin, coming in front of the portrait over the mantelpiece, and turning so that the light fell strongly on his features. "Can you tell me why my face is more like this portrait's, than the gentleman's you call Harvey Selberstone?"

These words produced a wonderful effect upon Mr. Jarvis Lamert. His under jaw dropped, and his eyes wandered in a bewildered manner from the face of the portrait to the face of Gavin Rintels.

"Where did you spring from?" was the exclamation that burst from his lips.

"Ah! you perceive the resemblance, do you?" questioned Gavin, eagerly.

Jarvis began to recover his composure.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Gavin Rintels."

"Rintels—yes—yes—that was the wife's name," muttered Jarvis, in a rather incoherent manner. "Gavin, after her father, probably—well, this is odd. Why, I thought you were dead long ago!"

"Ah!" exclaimed Gavin, "then that is the portrait of my father, and I am Harvey Selberstone."

Jarvis Lamert thrust his hands into his pockets, and regarded him with a provoking smile.

"You will find it difficult to prove that, young gentleman, in spite of your resemblance to the portrait," he said.

"Then let me help him," cried Herrick, springing to his feet. "There are enough people in this city who can prove that I am Edward Herrick, in spite of

my reported death. I am tired of the cheat, and wish to return to my wife and child."

"Yes, now you go and make a fool of yourself," growled Jarvis Lamert.

"I was a fool over to have consented to this fraud," retorted Herrick; "but that weakness has passed away, and I here renounce the scheme, be the consequences what they may."

Rachel went to him and took him by the hand.

"That is my own Edward again," she said. "You have been persuaded into this error against your better judgment, I know."

"Oh, yes," cried Lamert, sarcastically. "I am the designing villain, of course. I persuaded him, a poor wretch without a shilling in the world, into a handsome fortune, and a chance to marry a pretty girl worth lots of money. It did not require much pressing, though. And now he lets all go, because he has seen you, and finds his conscience too troublesome. With all my heart—I've got something else in view. He loses more by it than I do."

"There is your rightful heir," returned Herrick, as he pointed to Gavin Rintels. "You must make your next bargain with him." He turned to Rachel.

"Let me tell you," he said, "how you find me alive and bearing another name. The hope of gain, the basest sin of my life, led me from you to Liverpool, but I did not prosper there. I was soon stricken down with the fever, and conveyed to the hospital. The doctor gave me up, and I was carried out in a rude coffin, supposed to be dead. On the way to the cemetery the coffin was hurled to the ground and shattered to pieces. The shock revived me from the trance which had seized upon my senses. A gentleman living near saw the accident, and had me conveyed into his house. His care and kindness saved my life. That man was Jarvis Lamert."

"Your humble servant," said Jarvis, bowing ironically.

"While I was convalescing, and was still weak in body and mind," continued Herrick, "he proposed a scheme to me which the strong cupidity of my nature urged me to accept. He told me he had been left executor to a large estate, the heir to which was missing, probably dead; at all events, he could not be found. His proposition to me was that I should pretend to be that heir, and that we should share the estate between us. He farther said that detection was utterly out of the question, as he alone possessed the proofs of the existence of a son, and if the rightful heir should by any chance be found, he could never prove his claim without his assistance. I consented. We took possession of the property. This house belonged to Mr Selberstone; it chanced to be vacant at the time, and we took up our residence here. The success of our fraud gave me confidence. I mingled in good society, and, I must confess it, strove to forget the past, and persuade myself that I was another man. Lamert has used his best endeavours to force me into a marriage with Miss Sophie Burhap, but I can assure you that never for one moment have I seriously entertained the idea."

"I believe you," answered Rachel.

"Well, you have made a clean breast of it, haven't you?" exclaimed Lamert, sulkily. "You have put us both out of a good thing, but it is worse for you than for me—for I have got a stake left. The best thing you can do is to go home with your wife."

"Such is my intention," responded Herrick, "if she can find it in her heart to forgive me for what I have done."

"This is no place to speak of that," said Rachel, gently. "Let us go home."

They left the house together, with the child between them. Gavin Rintels was following, but Jarvis Lamert called him back.

"Sit down, my young friend," he said.

"Ah!" exclaimed Gavin, as he complied. "you want to sell your proofs?"

Jarvis Lamert burst out laughing.

"What a blunt fellow you are," he answered; "you go right straight at the mark. That's it, exactly."

"Then I am Harvey Selberstone."

"No, you're not!" He laughed again at Gavin's stare of surprise. "There never was any Harvey Selberstone."

Gavin looked grave—had his hopes deceived him after all? Lamert enjoyed his perplexity for a while, and then continued:

"You can't understand it at all, can you? Puzzles you, doesn't it? You couldn't do anything without me, could you? Now then, sit down here and write me a promise to pay me, for services rendered, ten thousand pounds when you come in possession of the Selberstone estate."

"Is this another shameful bargain?" asked Gavin. "I will be no party to a fraud."

"There is no fraud whatever," answered Lamert. "Write the paper."

Gavin did so.

"What name shall I sign to it?" he asked, with a smile.

"Gavin Rintels Selberstone," returned Lamert.

"But what of Harvey?"

"I tell you there was no Harvey—I merely invented the name, as no one knew the name the son went by but myself."

"Then I am the son of Mr. Conrad Selberstone?"

"You are; but I am the only man living who can prove it."

"Don't you think you are acting a little dishonourably in extorting this sum from me?"

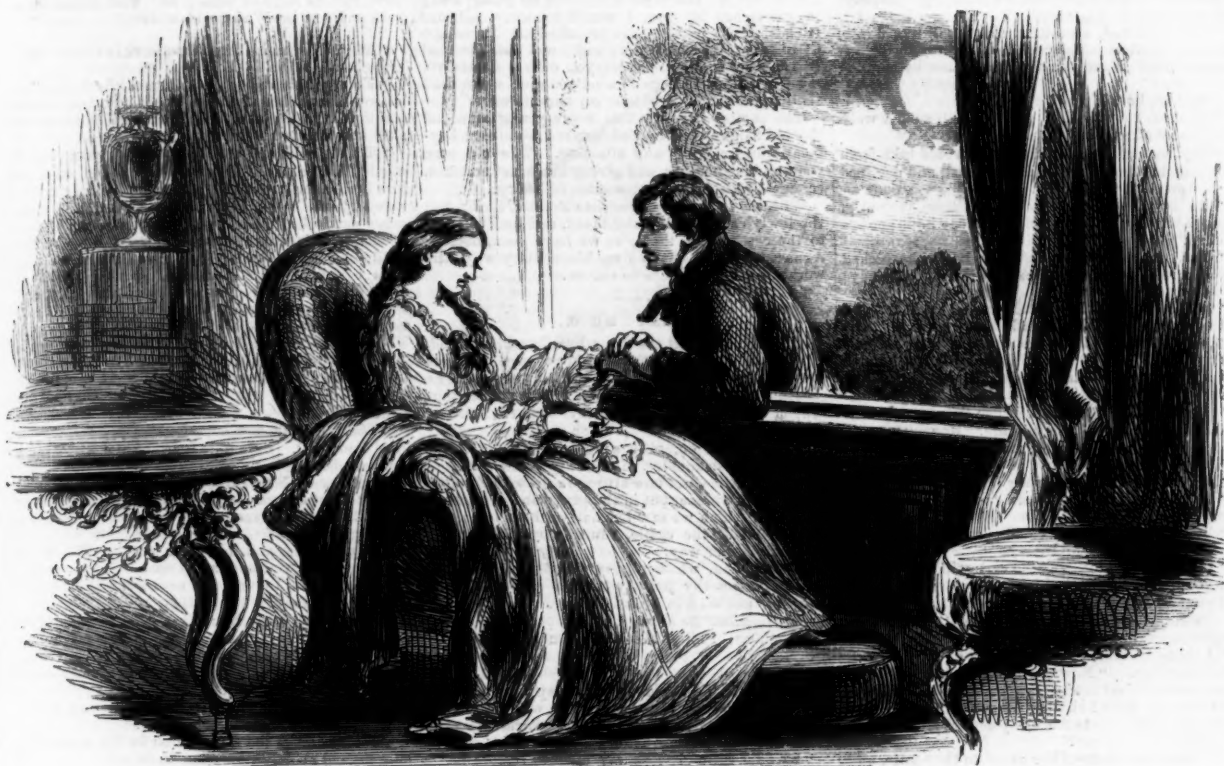
"I don't think anything at all about it. I am only feathering my own nest. Each for himself—it's the way of the world."

Gavin Rintels signed the paper. He saw no help for it, and thought he had better sacrifice a part than lose all. But Jarvis Lamert was as good as his word, and at once went to work to establish Gavin's claim, and, in due course of time, he was placed in possession of the Selberstone estate. When he paid Mr. Lamert his money it was with a polite intimation that the less he saw of him in the future the better pleased he should be. Jarvis Lamert pocketed the affront and the ten thousand pounds, and took his departure for other scenes.

Gavin sold a portion of his estate, and took up his residence in the house in St. Mark's Place. Strangely enough he made the acquaintance of Miss Sophie Burhap and married her; so Lamert's scheme succeeded after all—the names were united, though the bridegrooms were changed.

Rachel Herrick still kept her little shop, and her husband went to work again at his trade, a happier and more contented man. She had redeemed him from the one great failing of his nature, and she held him firmly in the true path through all the years that came.

G. L. A.



[PHILIP'S FAREWELL.]

THE SHELL GATHERER.

BY THE

Author of "The Crown Jewels," "Alfred, the Gipsy," &c., &c.

CHAPTER IX.

THE Earl of Montague slowly returned towards his castle, from the old church where he had talked with the weird woman. The interview between them lasted fully half-an-hour; and resulted in a conviction on his part, that, though he would not surrender Agnes to her appeals, he might permit the woman to visit and remain with her in her apartment, to keep watch.

"This much, I feel, is due to her singular affection for Agnes," he said to the countess, as he entered her room on his return, after having given an account of his interview with Dame Alice, "she is no witch, but a strong-hearted woman, who has been more abused by the superstitious hatred of ignorant people than she merits. I am satisfied that she will make a faithful nurse to the dear child; and she will need in her helplessness all the aid we can give her."

"But she is so old and hideous, my dear lord," objected the countess.

"Agnes is blind, and cannot know it."

"True. But may she be trusted?"

"Without doubt; her affection is her security, dear wife! And we owe this to her; for truly she has a greater claim to Agnes than we ourselves have. Besides, it is imperative upon me to proceed to Madrid. I must leave London in two days. It will be impossible to leave you behind to watch over her, and as impossible to take Agnes, helpless as she is. It would be dragging her through a tour of misery."

"But with whom, besides this Dame Alice, who perseveres in calling Agnes her child, shall we leave her?"

"My brother-in-law, Manners, will return to-morrow; and is to remain on furlough, you are aware, for several months, until his new frigate is completed. He remains here."

"I had forgotten it. We can leave Agnes in his good hands, and that of the marchioness, his amiable wife."

"Until our return. This is settled."

"I only object to this old dame."

"Consult Agnes. I have confidence in her, and to say truth, I would gladly see her about Agnes; for I believe we should render both happy. Do not forget that if she is dear to us, that we owe her to the courage of this woman."

At this moment a page entered.

"I will learn what Agnes says," answered the countess.

And the earl sat down to open and read some letters brought by the page from London, while the Countess Eleanora sought the chamber of the blind maiden. At the door her ear was arrested by low voices. She paused, and recognised in one of the speakers, Philip; the other was Agnes. She was seated in the window that opened upon the terrace. The moonlight revealed the shell gatherer standing outside, and leaning in over the very spot where she had in imagination written in the air his name with the point of the golden arrow.

"I am alone to blame, Lady Agnes," he said, in tones of self-reproach. "I shall never forgive myself. If I could restore your eyesight by giving up my own life, I would not hesitate a moment to sacrifice it."

"You are not to blame at all, Philip," she answered, very earnestly.

And she extended her fair hand to feel for his, to grasp it in token of her confidence in his innocence. He was timid and would not touch it; he had not boldness enough to put his hand into her warm clasp. He felt himself but a fisher's lad, while she was a high-born maiden—invested by her birth and beauty, in his lowly view, with the superiority of a goddess. It was bold in him, it is true, to steal to her window, and whisper her name as he had done; but it was from anxiety, from a desire to see her, and ask her forgiveness, and to know how she was; and if there was no hope that she could see again. She appreciated his kindness, and her grateful accents thrilled through and through his soul. He felt he could have lingered there all night, to listen to her musical voice, and gaze down upon that angelic face, the glorious eyes of which, in the moonlight, seemed seraphically bright.

The countess now entered, when the youthful shell gatherer, embarrassed, would have fled. But innocent of all evil, and having been aforesaid suffered by the countess to come into the castle to ask after Agnes, he checked the impulse and remained.

"So, Philip, you are not content with seeing Agnes by day, but you must come by night."

"I came, lady, to bid her good-bye. I am going away."

This was spoken sadly, but with decision.

"Whither? Not out of the country, I trust," said the countess, smiling at his manner.

"I am going to London, lady."

"And why there?"

"To seek my fortune. I am done with shell ga-

thering, since Agnes can see and admire them no more."

"But I can feel their shape and smoothness, Philip," she said, pleasantly; "and you can tell me all about their beautiful tints."

"I am resolved to go."

"And leave your old father?"

"He is not my father. He found me on a wreck at sea. This I have been told by him. He consents to my departure; for he hopes I may find my parents."

"Have you any clue?"

"Only a silver cup and an iron-rimmed compass which were taken by him from the wreck."

"And how will these aid you?"

"They have initial letters, and the compass the maker's name and number. I hope to learn by them what ship was wrecked, and then who were the passengers. My father, that is George, says I shall find the record in the port it sailed from, if I can only discover what ship the compass was sold to, or what person the silver cup was sold to. It bears the maker's stamp, and was made in the Strand in London."

"These may indeed aid; and I trust they will. But you go on a forlorn hope; yet you may find employment, and will do well in London," added the countess, who felt disposed to encourage the departure of one who was evidently too deeply interested in Agnes for his own or her happiness.

"Good-bye, Lady Agnes," said Philip, now taking her hand. "Forgive me your blindness. I shall not return until—"

Here his emotions overcame his voice, and touching his cap to the countess, he vanished in the shadow of the buttress, and he was soon rapidly moving across the moonlit lane, towards the highway, which wound through the forest surrounding the castle.

After he had thus suddenly taken his leave, the countess approaching Agnes took her hand, and found her weeping, great drops of tears chasing one another down her cheeks.

"What, my child! tears for a peasant boy?" said the countess, smiling, and gently wiping them away.

"Mother, he is more than a peasant boy. He is so noble, so frank, so kind."

"Yet it becomes you not to think of him."

"Mother, I have no other occupation now I am shut out from the beautiful world, but to think of those whose voices are kind. Philip is not the son of a fisherman. He may be well born, as I believe he is. Yet high or low born, he is kind, and he loves me, and I cannot but be grateful. Now that I am so helpless, I shall have few to love me; and I must cherish every heart. The blind are often dependent on the

attachment and faithfulness of a little dog. Reprove not my tears, dear mother."

"I am rebuked, sweet daughter. I like Philip almost as well as you do: and so does my lord think much of him. Have you any idea of how he is going to London?"

"On foot, he told me."

"He must have need of gold. I will send a well-filled purse after him."

"Nay, mother, I asked him if he would take from me ten gold pieces; but he looked hurt, and declined them—proudly, too."

"He is above his present condition evidently. George has taught him well, for I see he is accomplished."

"Yes. The old man has many books he picked up in chests from wrecks, and all these Philip says he has read."

"It is better that he should go, child. Better for both of you. Without doubt he felt it so, and therefore departed. But I have come to ask you, my dear child, if it is your wish to have the old Dame Alice about you? She entreats to be allowed to serve you."

"Then by all means suffer her to come. It will gratify me, for I owe her my life. Have you consented to please me, my dear mother, and go with my lord to Spain?"

"It is a sore question for my heart."

"But the good, noble captain and his lady will be here."

"Yes. To their care I could commit you without anxiety, if I leave you; but—"

"Leave me you must. The earl will have to go, and you must accompany him for his own happiness and your own."

"I will please you, then," answered the countess, a smile struggling through her tears.

"A thousand thanks, dearest mother," cried Agnes, embracing her. "Now I shall bear my affliction easier, since it does not involve the happiness of those I love most. Here I shall be happy. You will often write to me, and Dame Alice, my second mother, will read your letters to me."

The next day Dame Alice came to the castle, and applied for admission to see the earl. Her whole appearance was changed. She wore her hair smooth, and a cap above it, neatly tied. Her gown was plain but neat, and her whole air was that of a respectable village matron. The change of costume had produced a corresponding improvement in her face, and she wore a look of dignified repose. Lord Montecagle did not at first recognise her. The countess, who now beheld her for the first time, was prepossessed in her favour.

Willing to recognise the debt due to her, as the rescuer of Agnes, they now fully consented to give her the position near her, which she sought, and she was led to her room, and forthwith installed, greatly to her joy, in her new vocation.

The ensuing day, the naval nobleman and his wife arrived at the castle, and the following day, Lord and the Countess of Montecagle took their departure for London—not without a sorrowful parting from the lovely and unfortunate Agnes.

We will now follow the fortunes of the youthful Philip, on his way to seek his fortune, after his departure from Agnes and the castle.

He had left the sea-side home of old George that day, with the purpose of going to London. The old man had reluctantly given his consent; but he had become so proud of him after his victory on the archery-ground, that he was willing to indulge him in anything he asked.

"But my son," said the aged fisherman, "London is far away from hence; and it is a world of wickedness and woe, they tell me: where men know not each other, and no one has a neighbour. Yet I will not keep you here to waste your youth in shell-fishing. I know you are fitted for better things. But you cannot go without money. Here is a purse of gold. Use it with caution, as a man without money in the big world may as well be without eyes. Ah, you groan. You are thinking of the poor child, Lady Agnes. A sad misfortune!"

"And the surgeon, whom I met coming from the castle, and asked about her, yesterday, told me," answered Philip, with emotion, "that she can never see again."

"A pitiful accident," said the old man, shaking his white head, sorrowfully. "So fair, and young, and noble."

"She is so good, and kind, and gentle, and suffers so patiently that I cannot but weep when I look upon her."

"She seems to think mightily of you, my boy; and the earl and countess praised you to me till my heart rose right up with joy. But you are not fastening on your pack? You will not go to-day?"

"Farewell, my dear father. I know not how to thank you for all your kindness to me. If I thought

I could not do and serve you better by going away to get riches for you, I would remain. All our friends at the hamlet have promised me if you get ill to take care of you; and I will ask the kind Lady Agnes to inquire about you often. Good-bye, my dear father. I hope to send you good news, for I shall try at once to find who my parents were."

The parting between this noble young man and the old fisherman, who had fostered him from boyhood, was touching and affecting. The old man wept on his shoulder, and giving him a last embrace, commended him to the protection of heaven.

With his pack slung over his shoulder, Philip left the lowly cabin of his childhood, and took his way to the castle, and there, as we have seen, bidding Agnes adieu, he started on his solitary way, the world before him where to choose.

CHAPTER X.

His way lay past the churchyard, which stood, solemn and obscure, within the heavy shadow of its over-arching yew trees. He paused a moment as he passed the porch, to offer up a silent prayer that heaven would prosper his journey with the success his heart desired.

As he moved on, with a lighter spirit, he felt a touch upon his shoulder. He quickly turned, and beheld Dame Alice, not now attired in the wild costume of the weird woman, but in the grave and decent apparel with which we saw her half-an-hour later present herself at the castle, towards which she was now making her way.

"Young man, whither goest thou that thou hast need to preface thy journey with a holy prayer to heaven?" she said, in a kindly voice.

"To London," he answered.

"Thou art Philip, the foster-son of George, the fisherman?"

"Yes."

"I knew thee. I saw thee on the day of the archery sports. Thou wert victor, and didst win the golden arrow; but it cost thee the eyes of the fairest maiden thine own eyes ever beheld."

"I would willingly lose my own, to restore her," answered Philip, earnestly.

"Thou wert not to blame. It was the fierce wrath of Lord Cranstown which did the deed of guilt. His day will come. I saw all, and understood it all. Thou wert his successful rival, not only in the lists but in love."

"I do not know what you say, woman," answered Philip, blushing, yet with instinctive and happy consciousness.

"Can the eye, the lip, the cheek of him who loves tell tales contrary to the true heart. I watched thee and her. She loves thee, and thou regardest her with a greatness of love that thou dardest not own even to thine own soul."

"I am but an humble person, and I dare not love one like Lady Agnes," answered Philip. "I pity and feel sad for her, and—but—that is, I do not—at least, I may not look to her with love. She is to me as yonder fair star hanging in the western sky tremulous in the light of its own beauty. I gaze upon it with wonder and admiration, but I never hope to approach it. So with Lady Agnes. I gaze afar off, content to be far off, so that I may be permitted to gaze."

"Thou art not a peasant, young man. This is not the language and the thoughts of a fisherman's son."

"I am a foundling. I am not his son. He rescued me from the sea—found me a child upon a desert wreck, and reared me as his son. You speak to me so kindly, you have won my confidence, and so I tell you these facts freely."

"This is strange. Both children of the sea, and both loving one another with all their young hearts' fervour. There is a providence in this. I must not," she continued, to herself, "cross-purpose heaven's decrees. Then thou knowest not thy true parentage?" she asked, with deep interest.

"No, mother. A few books, a compass, and a silver cup are all that were taken from the wreck. She was so deeply sunk in the water that George could not see her name."

"And that compass, that cup. Have you them?"

"Here in my pack."

"Let me see them."

"There is hardly light enough for you to read the name on them."

"Then there are names."

He placed the cup in her hand. She closely examined it, and the stamp of the maker, "Hamel, London."

"I see what takes you up to London. You seek your parentage by these."

"Yes, but—not only this. I have a higher motive—but—but—"

"Nay, do not hesitate. I am thy friend for Agnes's sake. Would'st thou make a great name, or hopest

thou to find thyself noble, that thou mayest come back and win her?" she said, smiling.

"Not this only."

"Then what more canst thou have in view? What more besides this?"

"To see if there be not skill on earth, mother," he answered, with startling emphasis, and deep feeling manifested in his fine face; "to see if there be not skill on earth to restore sight to her."

"This is noble and worthy thy nature, young man," cried Alice, regarding him warmly, as he stood before her, his whole form dilated, and his bearing elevated by his one great thought. "And this, then, takes you to London?"

"All else is secondary. I thought not of going until she became sightless. At first I could not keep from believing that she would soon see. But as the surgeons declare her blind for life, I could not calmly consent to the abandonment of all hope. The surgeon who pronounced her incurable was from Windsor, and served the queen's household; and from his decision the countess said there could be no appeal, for there was no higher authority in the realm."

"Then what do you hope for?"

"I know not. I must go forward and see what I can do. France has men skilled in the eye, and I will go there. Nay, I have put a vow upon my soul never to rest or cease my search until I can discover the skill, if it be on earth, that will give her back her sight again."

"Heaven bless you, my dear youth. This is an angel's mission you are started upon. But you cannot travel from land to land, and over sea without gold."

"I have money."

"Not much I fear; let me see what thou hast?"

"Great store for a long journey, given me by my foster-father, George."

Here he opened his old leathern purse, and showed her a handful of small gold pieces.

"This is but little, my friend. Wait you here a few moments."

Thus speaking, she disappeared in the rear of the church, and shortly after came back with a black belt in her hand.

"Take this, and buckle it about your waist, beneath your frock. I have worn it many a year over sea and land. It will do thee good service."

Philip took it as she forced it into his hand. He was surprised at its weight.

"Is this money?" he asked, with amazement.

"Yes; one hundred pounds, in golden guineas. And there are in it, besides, many silver crowns. Buckle it about you, and speak no words of refusal. It is for Agnes."

"For her I take it then, and many blessings follow you, good woman. I know you not, only that you are her friend. If you see her, tell her you met me on my way, and that I sent my humblest homage to her; but betray not for what object I go on my journey. I may fail; and then, if she cherishes hopes, these would perish also."

"I will keep your secret. Know you that I will give your message to her. I am appointed to be one of her attendants, for now she may never be left alone. I will see that she forgets you not; for I will so speak of you whom she regards, as that she will love me for your sake."

"I must now proceed on my way, as evening is advancing," said Philip. "Farewell! and may heaven one day bring me back with one in my company skilled to give her back her sight."

"Be courageous and persevere, and we know not what may come to pass."

Here the young man gave his hand to the woman who had, to his surprise, manifested such interest in Agnes, and in his mission, and they moved off different ways, she towards the castle and he into the forest, over which the shadows of night were darkly gathering.

Late in the afternoon on the ninth day after leaving the neighbourhood of Castle Montecagle, Philip was slowly threading his way through the streets of London, towards the Strand. He was weary and footsore, for he had journeyed the whole distance on foot, desirous of saving every penny of the hoard for the actual needs of the future. No one regarded the youthful traveller as he made his way amid the throng on the side walks. Every face, every voice was new and strange. But he pressed on, with the idea—sight for Agnes—in his mind. This thought had sustained him through all his fatigues and voluntary privations. This holy purpose gave him strength above his own. He went on towards the Strand, inquiring his way every little while of such civil-looking people as he met. His object in seeking the Strand was that there his cup was made; and from often thinking of this name it seemed to his imagination to be the soul of London. It was the only name in London he had ever heard, and so for the "Strand"

he pressed forward. At length he came in sight of the Thames, and was soon told he was in the great street he sought.

His object attained so far, he began to feel weary, and sat down upon one of the lower steps of a large edifice, whereon were seated many women and children, with baskets of fruit to sell to passers-by. Like a river full to the flood of living beings the crowd rolled past, the body of the stream flowing one way, and an eddy the other. The noise, motion, multitude, novelty and wonderfulness of the scene awed and amazed him. He saw no one speak to another. Thousands passed and met thousands, but he perceived take place no word or nod or look of recognition between any. The universal brotherhood of the race seemed dissolved and no longer recognised.

"And this is the great world of which good old George spoke," he reflected, as he gazed on the vast crowd. "Men in it are isolated, and seem to have no common nature. Doubtless I might perish here and no eye regard me with pity, but with a hurried glance rush on. What is the death of one in such a million? What is a grain of sand dropped from a shell filled with it? But I must seek some lodging for the night, and to-morrow begin the work which I came hither to do."

He rose from the step, and, resuming his walk, came to a narrow alley, a short distance down which he saw a sign showing that it was an inn. To the door he made his weary way, and entering a low room neatly kept, with the floor sprinkled with white sand, he laid his pack on a chair, and, exhibiting a half-crown in his hand, asked if he could be accommodated for the night.

"Surely, my good youth," answered the landlady, with a welcome smile in her eyes; "you shall have a nice supper and a good, clean bed. You have travelled far to reach London town, by your looks," and, regarding with satisfied approbation his fine figure and handsome face, she poured out a tankard of foaming ale, and handed it to him.

Philip felt at once at home, rejoicing that in the great desert of London he had found so delightful an oasis.

CHAPTER XI.

THE morning after his arrival in London, Philip descended to the coffee-room of the inn, invigorated by rest and anxious to commence the search upon which his heart was set. It was late in the day, for fatigue had made him sleep long, and he found the good landlady had prepared his breakfast in her own little back parlour. Her kind "good morning," her pleasant smile, and the neat room, made him feel at home.

"Come, sit down and have a nice breakfast, my good man," she said, placing a chair for him. "I'll be bound you are hungry; but you look smarter than you did last night. Here is a mug of best ale, and such white bread as there is not found in every inn in London. Take a slice of this golden butter. It smells sweet of the country dairy."

As Philip ate she watched him attentively, and at length said, quickly and confidently:

"You are not what your dress betokens. Neither your looks, nor speech, nor demeanour betoken humble birth. What has brought you to London in disguise? Are you a young lord, run away from some home trouble?"

"I am only a fisherman's son, good dame," answered Philip, laughingly. "My dress and my rank quite correspond. I have passed my life in gathering shells and catching fish."

"You look greatly above your condition, not to flatter you. Now, will you tell me what has brought you up to London?"

"I am come up to seek my fortune."

"That has brought many a youth to London who has never found it. But I hope you will do well. But you can never live in London by fishing and shell-gathering."

To this Philip assented. The result of this social breakfast was that he told the good woman his whole history; how he had been found at sea, reared by old George, loved Agnes, won the golden arrow, and how she had become blind. He also told her how he was in hopes to find in some country, if not in London, someone skilled to restore her to sight. Moreover, he showed her the silver cup and iron compass.

That the pleasant hostess took a deep interest in his narrative need not be asserted, since she had taken so kind an interest in him for his fine face before she knew it. How potent is personal beauty! How it goes before its possessor, and paves the way for good opinion. If Philip had been an ordinary-looking young fisherman's lad, he would not have eaten his breakfast in the little private side-room, nor won the favour of the hostess. Beauty of person is potent.

It is a power, like money, over the minds of men. It is a power in itself that commands homage and receives it. Often it is more potent than gold, for it wins its way where gold would fail of success.

"Now, the first thing for you to do, Philip," said his new friend, the landlady, "is to go into the Strand, round the corner, and find the silversmith who made this cup. I have heard the name, or seen the sign, at least. They can, perhaps, tell you who they made it for. This will be a beginning. Here is a directory will show you where the place is; and also Kerr and Kerr's, where the compass was made. If you can get hold of the first step, you will be able, I doubt not, to trace up to who your father and mother are."

"I will call and see them first; but my main wish is to consult an eye surgeon. I will go to the greatest in London, and must go to-day. Each moment is precious to Agnes, if so be there is hope left that she may see."

"You are a noble young man! You deserve to succeed; but if the queen's surgeon has pronounced the young lady incurable, you have little room for hope. You will be careful and not get lost, and come back before dark."

Philip promised to do as she said, and, leaving his package in her possession, with the cup and compass, which he concluded not to take with him until he had found the places where the makers kept, he left the inn, and mingled with the human current in the Strand.

It was quite three hours before he found the silversmith's he was in search of. The door was blocked with carriages of the nobility, and many noble dames were within, selecting the most costly and beautiful silver plate that London furnished; for this house possessed the highest reputation, inasmuch as it was patronised by royalty. Philip, in his poor garb, presented quite a contrast even to the gay footmen of the titled dames. After some time he found opportunity to ask permission to look at the silver cups. The shopman, if he had looked wholly at his dress, would have disregarded his request; but meeting his eyes and feeling the superiority of his look over his own, he moodily obeyed. All that Philip desired was to examine the stamp on the bottom of the cup. It was, he saw with satisfaction, exactly the same as that upon his own which he left in the inn.

This verification filled him with hope; and shortly leaving the place, he found his way to the compass maker's, and verified the stamp upon his own there. He resolved to bring both articles down the next day, for, being numbered by the makers, it was possible they might know to whom they had sold them, though years ago.

From the compass maker's he now took his way, by frequent inquiries, towards St. James's Palace, near which he was told by the hostess that the most eminent oculist lived. The discovery of his own parentage was secondary in the mind of this noble youth to the discovery of skill to restore sight to Agnes.

He reached with great difficulty, from his ignorance of the streets, the destination he sought. It was near the close of day when he found the place. Then he nearly failed seeing the great man, who, though not the queen's surgeon, was eminent above him for skill in his profession in the eyes of the people. He was just entering his carriage.

"Sir, if you please, listen to me one moment," cried Philip, eagerly holding by the side. "I have come all the way to London to see you! There is a noble and beautiful lady become perfectly blind, and—"

"Go on!" cried the surgeon to his coachman.

Here the driver rudely started the horses, and threw the young man violently to the ground. He was not hurt; but, on rising to his feet, the equipage was far beyond his reach, and he was hustled hither and thither by the crowd, until, with his disappointment and the Babel confusion around, he became bewildered, and escaped from the throng by the first opening he could find.

"I will return to-morrow," he said, as he reflected upon what had just passed. He may not have heard me with all the noise. I will go and see him early."

When Philip looked about him he knew not by which way to return to the "Arrow" inn. There were three streets which met at this point, and he had forgotten which he came down. But recollecting that the Strand was near the river, he resolved to follow the streets parallel with it, until he should come to it. He had not proceeded far before he was lost, and unable to tell which way to go; he stepped on board a small boat, to ask two men, who were seated, the way he should take. A waterman himself, he felt confidence in men of like craft, and so hoped to have such directions from them as would enable him to find his way.

He could not see their faces distinctly, as the twilight was deepening. The boat was one of a score that lay in close to the pier-head.

"I say, Ben, this Londoner wants to know how to steer for the Strand," said one of the men who was forward to his shipmate aft.

"Ay, ay! Come aboard, my lad," was the answer, in a gruff voice.

"Can you direct me?" asked Philip, civilly.

"Oh, that we can, without chart or compass! Take a seat aft here, and we will land you there in the turning of a reel."

"Do you pull that way?"

"We shall be off in ten minutes. Take a seat on that thwart, and you shall have passage free!"

"Thanks; you are very kind," answered Philip, unsuspicious of any evil, but frankly accepting what he believed to be frankly offered.

Philip was soon in easy conversation with his companions; but, finding that it grew darker, and they did not start, he rose up, and said he would try and find his way by land.

"No, avast there, mate!" said the elder of the two, lightly laying his hand on his shoulder, and keeping him in his seat. "We only wait for the captain. Here they come now," he added, as a party of men drew near, walking rapidly.

Part of them seemed to be armed, and to be dragging the rest along. They soon came to the boat, but not without noise and a struggle between those who wore swords and those who seemed to be their captives.

"Steady your boat, men, and stand by to receive our prisoners!" cried the leader.

Philip, on seeing and hearing this, took the alarm, and rose to leap again upon the pier. But he was caught by the forward man, and drawn violently back into the boat. But he recovered, and sprang out, only to be knocked down senseless.

The boat, which was a cutter, having gained the stream, pulled down swiftly through the heart of the parted city, now shooting beneath a bridge, now drawing in shore to avoid vessels. A thousand lights on the shores were reflected in the river, and the sounds of the streets filled the air, like a storm roaring through a forest. Voices in all keys reached their ears, from the gruff call of seaman to the startling shriek of a female. Swiftly the cutter kept on her way.

"Who is the lad in the fore-sheets?" asked the lieutenant, in a cold, unfeeling tone, speaking for the first time since they had left the pier.

"A country youth, sir. Said he was a fisherman. Lost his way, and came to ask us; and we kept him on board."

"Shall I duck him, sir?" asked Gordon.

"No. We shall soon have him on board ship. All these fellows fought hard, and the surgeon will have work to do for us. These five will make up our complement of men, and to-morrow we weigh and put to sea."

"May I ask, sir," said one of the men, who had been, with his fellows, hitherto silent, except uttering an occasional oath or groan, "what port you are to sail to?"

"You may ask, my man, but to get answered is another thing," replied the officer, with a hard laugh.

The cutter was now passing the dark walls of the Tower of London, and, after a quarter-of-an-hour, drew up alongside of a frigate that was moored in the middle of the Thames.

The captives, some of them earnestly protesting and struggling against being taken on board, were speedily transferred to the ship's deck. Philip remained insensible, and was placed in the care of the surgeon, who had him conveyed to the cockpit.

(To be continued.)

SCOTCH GOLD.—The general run of diggers' earnings are from 15s. to 20s. per day.

It is now quite common to see the postmen in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham going their rounds upon velocipedes.

It is stated that an interview between the Emperor of the French and the Emperor of Russia will take place at Baden in the course of the summer.

THE number of paupers in receipt of relief at the end of March, 1899, in England and Wales was 1,012,741, being an increase of 16,095 on the corresponding period of 1898.

ANOTHER betting-house keeper of Manchester was taken before the city magistrates recently and fined 75s. This raises the total amount of fines for the offence to 1,475s., and there have been no defaulters.

THE fasting girl at Ulverston, who it is said, has abstained from food since last October, has now commenced to both eat and talk. She has according to report, been twenty-five weeks without any solid food passing her lips, sixteen without having her lips even moistened.



FAIRLEIGH; OR, THE BANKER'S SECRET.

CHAPTER XLIX.

Rowe glanced at his watch; it was now eight o'clock. He sat for some time in deep meditation, drumming on the paper. What was this secrecy? It did not look honest, and yet the letter was worded fairly. He was in a quandary; he had half decided to return home; he had come to the conclusion that the whole affair was a plot, when suddenly he thought of the great good to be accomplished. Straightway his doubts vanished.

"What, give it up now?" he exclaimed, "when I am upon the eve of a startling revelation. Croaking spirit, be still! Circumstances are probably such that this secrecy is necessary. At all events, I go this night."

So saying, he buttoned up his coat, examined the lock of his revolver, saw that it was in good order—he might have occasion to use it; at least, it was a wise precaution.

Locking the door of his room, he hastened downstairs, and hailing a cab, entered, and ordered caddy to drive to — street.

Arriving at the thoroughfare, he alighted, and looking into the arch designated by the letter, found it was empty. The clock had struck nine, and anathematising the whole affair as a hoax, a treacherous decoy, he turned to go, when he heard the word: "Hold!" uttered in a low tone, and what he thought to be a female voice.

He immediately turned, and from an arch on the other side, came a fair-looking woman, who advanced towards him and said:

"Give me your arm!"

"But what have—"

"Enough! I will talk as we proceed," she interrupted, in a voice scarcely above a whisper, as she placed her arm within his.

Rowe did not like this mode of managing affairs, and remarked, rather impatiently:

"If you have anything to tell me, be quick about it! Why this mystery?"

"If you think the result will not be worth your patience and trial, why, I release you," she answered, stopping.

"No, no!" ejaculated Rowe, suddenly interested. "I beg your pardon; 'twas my very earnestness that caused my abrupt speech."

"Well then, I will tell you. There is a conspiracy to keep your mother from you. I, myself, was at one time interested in it. Nay, do not start; I am true

[TREACHERY.]

to your cause. My conscience troubled me, and accidentally—by the merest chance—I discovered your address; then I wrote to you. Your co-operation is needed. By persistent and energetic efforts, I trust she can be restored to you, but it requires work, for there are many against us."

"Who—where is my mother—how shall we begin?" he ejaculated, in rapid succession.

"I cannot answer your questions to-night."

"Cannot—and why not?"

"Because the time has not yet come; large bodies move slowly; ere long you shall know all."

Rowe was uneasy. "I do not like this procrastination, this secrecy. Why is it?"

"Do you believe me, or are you willing to sacrifice everything, after all the interest and trouble I have taken?"

"And why are you interested?" he persisted.

"You are impatient; that I cannot now reveal to you. It all turns upon your belief in me. Will you trust me?" she stopped and looked him full in the face.

Rowe gazed searchingly upon the features. In the main they were those of an honest, good-intentioned person; yet there was something about the eye and forehead that he distrusted. He hesitated; should he trust her? he thought not.

She seemed to divine his thoughts, for she said: "You hesitate—you do not wish to trust me; then all is over, and your mother must languish—"

"Languish! what mean you? Is she confined, imprisoned? Speak, woman!" he exclaimed; every other consideration vanishing before the dread conjecture that one word aroused.

"I cannot say. I will meet you again. But first, you must bind yourself to be guided by me."

Again he paused; he did not like her obstinacy.

"Your mother!" she said, impulsively, fixing her eyes upon him.

That one word was electrical, it decided him. His resolve was taken, foolishly, rashly taken, and he returned:

"I will do as you require. What is it?"

"Swear that you will hold converse with no living person in regard to this, without my direction; that you will follow, obey, and be guided by me, where-soever I may take you, or whatever I may do, legally, of course. Do you swear?"

"My word of honour."

"Your oath!"

He gave the required pledge, and then said:

"But what assurance have I, who never saw you before or knew that you existed, that you will not lead me into the jaws of death or Nowgate?"

"The word and heart of a woman," she impressively responded.

Rowe made no reply, and they walked on for some moments in silence. At the end of which time he queried:

"Have you anything else to tell me to-night? I wish that you would be more frank; I hate mystery."

"I know it. I can say no more. Farewell!"

Ere the words had ceased to ring upon his ears, he was alone, and she out of sight. He stood a moment, almost stupefied with amazement. He was near an alley; he walked in and looked about, but no traces of her were perceptible.

He re-entered the main street in a peculiar frame of mind. He was annoyed, aggravated, perplexed, and half doubted the evidence of his own senses.

He was walking along, thinking as he went, and, before he was aware of it, was opposite his hotel.

He entered, and proceeded to his room. Thus far he had not accomplished anything, but seemed to be retrograding instead of advancing. He half regretted taking the oath—but why? He knew not. Now that he had set out upon it he was obliged to go on.

Why did she not tell him when to again meet her? That was inexplicable; again, it did not seem consistent with her professed theory. These were troublesome thoughts, and he tried to drive them away by thinking of the matchless bliss that would be his, if the great object of his visit would be attained.

As he lifted his overcoat from a chair, where he had hastily flung it as he entered, a paper fell to the floor.

He stooped and eagerly grasped it, quickly opened it, and read these words:

"Next time you shall know more. Be not impatient. The end shall justify the means whereof it is attained. Fear not. Meet me at the same place on Wednesday, at the same hour. MINNA."

Rowe read and re-read the laconic and forcible epistle. One sentence particularly attracted his attention, but why he could not tell. It was the one above quoted:

"The end shall justify the means whereof it is attained."

He pondered long over this, but he could discover no affinity between it and any other words she had uttered, except the general meaning, which he at once understood. But he had been searching for a deeper one, but he found it not. Why was he so restless, doubting and uneasy?

The two days intervening passed to Rowe very slowly, and on the evening of the following Wednesday he again sallied forth to meet the strange woman; not, however, without some misgivings as to the expediency of the nocturnal councils.

She glided forth from the arch as he drew near the church, and placing her arm within his, walked

in a direction opposite to the one they had taken a few nights before.

"Well, well," burst out Rowe, who could not endure the silence, "what have you to tell me to-night?"

"To-night thou shalt hear but little; it is meet you hear but little and act more."

"Woman, cease this nonsense!" he exclaimed, exasperated at what he considered the assumed sanctimonious words and tone. "This trifling is futile; once for all, finish what you began to say on Monday night."

"You are premature. Will you wait and bide your time? To-night we go to a certain place."

"And where may that place be?"

"Do you forget your oath?" she asked.

He saw that she had the best of the argument, and kept silent.

On they walked, through side streets, lanes and alleys, until Rowe awoke from the meditation into which he had fallen, and noticing the locality, said: "You must tell me where we are going. This section of the city is not renowned for its honesty or quietude."

"Leave all to me. To-night shall be the first. I shall be glad when we see the last."

Rowe was struck by the peculiarity of her words, and the impressive and sincere manner in which they were uttered. She was a strange creature. He looked at her inquiringly, keenly; but the face betrayed no emotion of any kind, the features were calm.

"You speak in riddles," he said, after a moment had passed; "you clothe your words with a mystic air, unbecoming an occasion like this."

"You see with your eyes, and think with your mind—I see with my eyes, and think with my mind."

Half provoked, half distrustful, but still adhering to his resolution to trace it out, Rowe suffered himself to be led on.

Presently they neared a dark lane, at the entrance of which Rowe hesitated. "You know the object," she said; he felt his strong will-power succumb, and they entered.

They neared the door of a forbidding-looking house. The woman knocked, the door opened; she passed in and bade Rowe follow her.

"Shall I enter?" he thought. Reason said "no!" Infatuation—blind infatuation said "yes!" he obeyed the latter.

She conducted him into a small room on the ground floor, at the left of the entrance.

Rowe gazed around him with contempt and disgust. The room was dirty, gloomy, dismal.

"What have you brought me to this hovel for?" he asked, with vexation.

"It must be," was her only reply.

He made no reply. Strange, mortifying, inexplicable as it was, her will overpowered his; strong volition as he possessed, it was nothing in comparison to hers. It was a magical, serpent-like charm that she exercised over him, and he knew it to his sorrow, yet could not resist it.

Presently she said:

"Here, allow me to bandage your eyes."

"Forbearance ceases to be a virtue; this I will not submit to!" he almost angrily exclaimed, stepping back.

She gazed at him with those deep, syren-like eyes, and then hissed rather than spoke:

"Your oath."

His word had been given, and with great reluctance and apprehension he submitted to the operation.

"Come, tread easy and be quiet," she whispered; and taking his hand, she led him through narrow passages redolent with stagnant atmosphere, up flights of stairs, then down; then through rooms that seemed to be empty, and gave forth hollow echoes from their footfalls; then down, down again, until he knew that he was beneath the surface of the earth; and confused, provoked, and weary, he demanded an explanation.

"Your oath!" were the only words that returned to his ear. And on, on they went, the two enthusiastic young man and his mysterious guide.

At last they entered a room. He imagined he heard a hum of voices; if he did they were immediately silenced, and their owners spirited away; for when the bandage was removed from his eyes he found himself in a low subterranean cavern, enclosed by walls of solid masonry, with a long table in the middle of the apartment, at which only one man was seated.

This man Rowe did not like the looks of; not that he was of a suspicious appearance, far from it; he was rather mild than otherwise, and with an expression too affable, beneath which lurked a crafty, sinister expression, that could not escape the eyes of a person so well versed in the art of studying countenances as the young doctor.

Rowe glanced about him with an air of suspicion. A sensation of impending evil crossed his mind, and he inserted his hand inside his cape and grasped his pistol.

The man noticed it, and pointing to a chair, said pleasantly:

"Sit down, sir, you need have no fears of treachery. I am well aware that the place is uninviting; but it suits our purpose."

Half assured, though still vigilant, Rowe seated himself upon the rickety apology for a chair, and remarked:

"What am I here for? Why these dark and secret proceedings in a cause that is just and honourable?"

"I do not wonder at your question," returned the man, not at all ruffled by the other's imperative manner. "But you will see and feel the reasons ere long. Minna," addressing the woman, "be seated."

She drew a stool near to the table, and seated herself. Close together in that strange room sat the three; the dim light casting its yellow rays over the handsome, expectant face of Rowe, and the immovable faces of his two companions.

'Twas a weird, ominous silence—a gloomy, dismal place.

Leaning forward and looking Rowe directly in the face, the man began:

"Your object is one which enlists the whole sympathy of your nature, and the love of your heart. We intend to aid in the restoration to her rights of your only living parent. I will be brief. In the Convent of St. Mary, on the outskirts of Paris, your mother to-day is a prisoner; be calm, and hear me through. Enemies, of whom it is not now my purpose to speak, proposed to detain her there. We propose to rescue her, and return her to your arms. The crime she stands accused of before the world, she is not guilty of—"

"Thank heaven," gasped Rowe, intensely interested.

"To do this," continued the other, "will take some time. I am now in communication with a friar at the convent; by money we have enlisted him; we can do nothing without him; he will be here on Saturday next. The convent is accessible only through his influence, by that we shall arrive at the climax of this now unhappy, but which I hope will prove joyful business."

"But what interest can you have?" asked Rowe, perplexedly.

"Your oath!" admonished the woman.

Again he was silenced, and the man continued:

"Next Saturday evening at eleven o'clock, Minna and I will meet you at the docks."

"But why not here?" interrupted the doctor, a vague suspicion crossing his mind.

"Because I hardly dare trust the fellow here. If the scheme should fail, which I trust it will not, our retreat would be discovered, and you as well as we would suffer. I believe that is all; your oath binds you to secrecy—remember."

The woman arose, replaced the bandage over his eyes, and again they wended that devious path. She walked with him until he was in a part of the city with which he was acquainted, and then left him with the following words:

"Ere long you shall see her, and remain with her for ever."

With his mind overflowing with the thoughts of the singular persons he had seen, the strange places that he had been in, and the dire revelations that had become his, Rowe walked on towards his hotel.

The whole affair was an impenetrable, terrible mystery. One moment he thought them sincere, and desirous of restoring him to happiness. The next moment he thought them conspirators, and plotting for his death. And thus his reflections jarred, conflicted and warred against each other, until his mind was a miniature pandemonium. But think as he would, his last words invariably were:

"I will continue. It is my mother's cause."

The three days seemed to draw into months, to the expectant, excited young man, and at last the night came for his next visit.

The hours were obstinate; time seemed to halt and mock him; but after an evening of toilsome, aggravating, tantalising waiting, he buttoned up his coat and hurriedly left the hotel.

Ere he had proceeded half way to the place designated, he was joined by Minna, who placed her arm within his, with the same reserved air, and walked on without speaking.

After a long and brisk walk, they reached the place of rendezvous. 'Twas a sleety, cold, dismal night, and the surging black waters were not at all inviting. Rowe shuddered, as he contemplated his surrounding, and was half inclined to refuse to proceed. He was no coward, not he; but a strange feeling came over him, a terrible foreboding, portentous, fascinating, as it was indescribable.

The gaslight shed sombre, hazy rays from its soiled glass; the rain and sleet beat down unmercifully; the wind sighed and moaned and shrieked through the rigging of the vessels. It was indeed a dreary night.

Under the gaslight, near the edge of the pier they halted. In a moment they were joined by the man of the secret chamber, who greeted Rowe politely, remarked upon the inclemency of the weather, and then said:

"I hardly know what to think; I saw the friar this morning, he promised to come, but has not yet made his appearance."

"It is not very comfortable here," mused Rowe; "I hope he will not detain us long."

"We are a little in advance of time," he rejoined, and added with a shrug of the shoulders: "Whew—how the wind blows, the sleet is actually painful."

The woman drew near to Rowe, and said:

"I will now reveal to you something which you desire to know."

And she fixed those basilisk eyes upon him.

"Your mother was abducted upon the night of the murder of your father."

Rowe shuddered, and again listened.

"Patiently she bore her sorrow, with her name blackened in her own country."

The man leaned forward in front of Rowe as if to listen.

"What detains him," asked Rowe, whose information was not very absorbing, being a mere repetition.

"He will be here presently; in fact, he comes now."

The woman claimed Rowe's attention, he turned towards her; she placed her face close to his, and said:

"I am your mother!"

As these words fell upon his ear, a dread feeling came over him; then he saw that he had been deceived—he placed his hand upon his pistol, exclaiming:

"'Tis a plot—a lie! I—"

At that moment a heavy blow struck him from behind, he staggered, and fell into the cold, wintry waves.

The woman hastened away.

The man laughed a low, scornful, exulting laugh, and gazed into the foaming surf.

"Curse him!" he hissed, "he will get his coat off and swim," and he drew a pistol from his pocket, glanced along the barrel with his eye, and fired.

With a shriek, Rowe raised his agonised face towards heaven, and murmured:

"Florence—my love—oh, my—"

The cold, surging waters rushed over him, and he sank beneath the restless, moaning waves.

Ah, dear, patient Floss, too true, alas, has your vision become. What sorrow awaits you!

While Walter Dalvane and his good mother were blessing Charles Rowe in their hearts—while Floss wished for him, and looked forward to meet—while Clarence anxiously looked for some intelligence from him—while love, wealth and friendship waited for him, he was sinking in the waters—away from home and all that he held dear—sinking, alas, sinking!

CHAPTER L.

A MONTH had passed since the events narrated in the last chapter occurred.

Florence, although greatly relieved by the news which her brother brought from Brookfield in regard to Rowe, could not repress the solicitude that she so deeply felt as time passed on, and nothing more was heard from him. Clarence, too, shared her feelings. Rowe had been expected home in two weeks at the longest, and a month had flown—why did he not come?

Mr. Ormsby still preserved the same listless, melancholy appearance. At times he would rise above it, and throw off the mental apathy that possessed him; but this, though pleasant, was only temporary, and in a short time he would again subside into painful dejection.

As Clarence saw his father's spirit, which had once been so proud and strong, slowly being broken by a mental hallucination, he almost determined to demand an explanation. But a look at the features, still stern, and the brilliant, determined light that still burned in his father's eye warned him that such a procedure would, at least, be exceedingly dangerous to his happiness, and with a sigh he relinquished the idea, and endeavoured to live without complaining under the ban that seemed provided for him. Money he had, but he wanted that which money cannot purchase—peace of mind, mental content, and quietude.

On the afternoon of which we write, Mr. Ormsby, senior, visited the city. He had not been there for some time, and, to vary the monotony of home life, he determined to call upon a few of his business friends and have a pleasant chat with them.

The first one he called upon did not treat him with that cordiality which he had been wont to extend to him; but seemed nervous, fidgety and, withal, rather crabbed. Knowing that the cares of business are sometimes apt to ruffle a man's temper, and that evenness of disposition is a very rare thing, he thought little of it, but proceeded next to one of his most intimate friends. Again a cold reception, a reserve almost approximating to effrontery met him, and, with just indignation, he inquired the cause, and received for his answer:

"I don't believe a word of it, Ormsby; but still—
"Don't believe a word of what?" ejaculated the banker, a terror striking his heart.

"Ahem—I don't want to repeat scandal. You and I have been friends—I do not want to hurt your feelings—but you know society is just so-and-so, the slightest wave on its surface will either make or ruin a man. You know that society holds—"

"But what has all this to do with me?" he impatiently burst forth.

His former friend moved uneasily in his chair, knitted his brows, and at length said:

"As a friend, Ormsby, I would advise you to go to Paris. You have money enough—leave London, it will be better for you."

"Now, by the rules that govern gentlemen, I demand your meaning!" exclaimed his hearer, excitedly rising to his feet.

"There, there, I knew I should make a mess of it. Confound it, Ormsby, it is an old story with new additions, and enough to set society agog in regard to you. Whether true or not, society has already got hold of it, and looks down upon you."

Edgar Ormsby was trembling; but now that there seemed such occasion to use his strong will and self-possession, they returned to him.

He stood regarding the speaker with features cold, calm, incredulous, and proud; then he said:

"Why these hints—what story do you refer to? Where is my character of thirty years' standing in this metropolis, if it cannot falsify any such assertion? I am astonished, ay, astounded—I—I assailed in this manner! Who is the author of this slander? If I find him he shall suffer!" As he uttered the last word his fist fell upon the desk with crashing force.

"There, there, don't rave. I hated to see you, because I hated to tell you. I don't believe a word of it; but still, if I should call at your house before it is cleared up, why, the odium will fall upon me."

"So," said Ormsby, drawing his fine form proudly up, while his eyes flashed, "so I stand banished from society. I will not trouble you again. When society again sees me, society will seek and beg of me!"

And with many emotions surging within his breast, yet outwardly defiant, and bitterly sarcastic, Edgar Ormsby turned and left the office.

His face was sad, his step indicative of the state of his mind. He cared not for himself personally—his wife and daughter were the subjects of his thoughts. To see them passed by, ignored by those who had so lately been their companions, would be too much. But so it was, and it must be endured. He dreaded to go home; and retracing his steps, went towards his banking-house—or rather, his son's.

"You are weary, father," said Clarence, as he entered.

"Yes, my boy, very," he responded, sinking into a chair.

"I am very much surprised at two or three things that have occurred to-day," remarked Clarence, "Stormbein and Co. have drawn every shilling of their deposit—the stock in our 'Copper Company' has fallen very nearly to par—'Lewis and Co.' have also withdrawn their funds, and twenty-thousand pounds' worth of our paper has come in, which I have of course redeemed."

Mr. Ormsby sighed. "I expected it," he said, dejectedly.

"Why, father, why? Do tell me what oppresses you; you cannot fail to see that it has long worried me," burst out Clarence, unable to restrain himself.

Mr. Ormsby passed his hand wearily over his brow; and then, ignoring his son's question, replied:

"There will probably be more withdrawn to-morrow; the banking-house might as well be closed."

"Father, father; what is this—why these foreboding thoughts—this sad tone—this mystery?" he ejaculated.

"Ask me no more, control yourself. Be a man to-night, Clarence, for your mother and sister will probably need your support."

The young man's head fell upon his hands, he remained silent for a few moments, and then arising, with a settled expression of resignation intermingled with determination upon his features, he gave orders to close the bank; and, in company with his father, he entered a cab and rode towards home in silence.

They found the drawing-room empty, Mrs. Ormsby and Florence not having yet returned from their afternoon calls.

CHAPTER LI.

A PORTER informing Mr. Ormsby that a gentleman awaited him in the library, he left Clarence in the drawing-room, and proceeded to meet his visitor.

As the banker entered the library, his gaze fell upon a young man of good appearance and fashionably dressed, not over twenty-four years of age, and seated upon the sofa, idly tapping his boot with a slender cane.

"I understand that you desire to see me, sir?"

"Ahem, yes, rather you want to see me?" replied the stranger, with a significant look.

"I?—indeed, sir, I know you not, and cannot say that I have any particular desire to."

"Perhaps not; but I rather think you will before a great while," he said slowly, and with an impudent gesture.

"Explain yourself, sir! What mean you by these innuendos and grimaces?"

"You remember some years ago, not far from twenty, eh, don't you?" with a vast deal of assurance and sarcasm.

"Remember what, sir? Your words as well as your manner are impudent."

"My words and manner are within my control. I am here to reveal to you something which may change your placid countenance."

"Enough of this, sir," exclaimed Mr. Ormsby, rising, "I encourage no confidence men."

"Oh, don't hurry! keep your seat," drawled the stranger, with an authoritative wave of his hand; "I don't want to be hard with you unless you force me to."

"This insolence to me, and in my own house! Be careful, sir, or my anger may override my reason."

"Now don't get excited, it won't do; I'm not afraid of you; sit down and keep cool."

Edgar Ormsby was in a towering passion; the bold, audacious effrontery of the conceited individual was hard to bear, and he said, determinedly:

"Young man, cease this impertinence, and make known your business, if you have any."

He drew nearer, and looking him directly in the face, answered:

"That's just what I'm coming at; hear me quietly. I am Carlos de Argyle, the true son and heir of Hugh de Argyle, who was murdered nearly nineteen years ago; need I tell you any more?"

Although there was a tempest in Edgar Ormsby's breast—although he trembled inwardly, his exterior was calm and smiling, and in a cool, self-possessed manner, he replied:

"Well, what is all this to me?"

"Ha, ha! you are a good dissembler, you are; but it won't do, oh no."

"Silence, sir! no more of this; leave this room."

"Don't be rash now; I assure you it won't pay," sneered the other. "You are not yourself, man."

Standing by the desk, his eyes flashing fire, yet apprehensive, Edgar Ormsby ordered him to proceed.

"You are wise to say that. I was abducted along with my mother at the time of the murder, and a false heir placed in my stead, to whom my father's property has since descended. You know who murdered my father—you know who carried me away," and he gazed at the pale, yet determined man before him with an expression of triumph.

"Why do you relate this to me?" he asked, in a cold, hard, yet subdued tone. "Where have you been in the meantime?"

"I—why, I was separated from my mother, and placed in the care of an old woman, who brought me up; by the merest accident I learned my lineage, and now I have returned to bring justice to my father's murderers."

A pallor shot across Edgar Ormsby's face, but it disappeared as quickly as it came; then he said:

"Well, why don't you find them; what do you come to me for?"

"What do I come to you for? Edgar Ormsby, I come to you to save you."

As he said this he arose and placed his hand upon the banker's shoulders.

The touch caused a shudder to run through Edgar Ormsby's system, and tremblingly he sank into a chair. By a superhuman effort he controlled himself, and said, in a husky voice:

"Well, what then?"

"You stand upon a precipice where one word from me can send you to the abyss of infamy below. I will save you if you will agree to my conditions."

The banker's eyes stared wildly about, the perspiration stood upon his forehead in drops, his mind was chaos, and in a quivering voice he said:

"What are the conditions? name them."

"I will. As you well know I am of good family. As I rode along the street, a carriage passed me; in it was a lovely girl, a Hebe, one of nature's loveliest works. I asked my companion who she was—he told me 'the daughter of a millionaire, Edgar Ormsby!'"

The banker groaned.

"I love her," continued the man, excitedly. "I loved her the instant I saw her."

"Well, well," interrupted the other, tremulously.

"I love her; if you will give her to me, all shall be well. I have a good home—she shall be cared for. Will you give her to me? Yes, honour—no, ignominy. Choose!"

"Oh, heaven! Floss, my own Floss, must you, too, be sacrificed?" moaned the stricken parent; and he buried his face in his hands.

A terrible struggle was going on in Edgar Ormsby's breast, his body rocked to and fro convulsively, and he groaned with anguish. In a moment a gentle influence seemed to steal over his being and hush the

angry sorrow that absorbed his soul; his trembling ceased, and he started to the floor, his face pale but calm, his eye burning brightly, and in angry tones he exclaimed:

"By heaven, sir, do you take me for an imbecile, to submit to this? Never! never will I sacrifice my beloved child!"

The other looked disappointed and mortified, then a sinister smile passed over his features, and he said:

"Think of the consequences, I—"

"Silence!" thundered the banker. "Go from my presence. I command you, go!"

He arose, and with a vengeful gleam in his eye, hissed:

"You have sealed your fate! Remember! remember!"

Edgar Ormsby heard the door close, and he knew that his visitor had departed. For a few moments he sat immovable; many were the thoughts that overwhelmed him, but as his trouble increased, the languor which had oppressed him seemed to vanish, and he stood himself; the strong, confident man—strong in his knowledge of right—confident of ultimately having justice done.

Having recovered from his excitement, he entered the drawing-room. His wife and daughter had not arrived; he glanced at his watch—it was four o'clock. He was somewhat surprised at their continued stay, and seated himself by the window to watch for them.

Presently the carriage drew up before the door, and Mrs. Ormsby, closely veiled, alighted, followed by Florence, and entered the house.

She entered the drawing-room. The tears that had trembled upon her eyelids now burst forth, and throwing herself upon the sofa, she sobbed violently, while Floss, pale, yet self-possessed, stood gazing sadly upon her mother.

"My wife—my Alice—what is it? Why do you weep? Tell me," he said tenderly, as he would talk to a child, "tell me all, sweet wife."

"Oh, Edgar!" was her only reply, as she threw her arms about his neck and nestled her head upon his breast, while her bosom rose and fell convulsively and the tears rained from her eyes.

"Oh, mamma, do not grieve; they never cared for us, 'twas only our money; this is nothing to what might happen; we have a happy home, all that heart could wish, dear mamma—do be calm," urged the affectionate daughter, as she knelt down by her side.

"Oh, but it is so hard to be refused admittance, and to the house of my friends, as if I were a crim-criminal. What have I done, oh, what have I done to mer-merit this?"

She could say no more, the sobs choked her utterance, and she wept unrestrainedly.

Each word cut like a knife into Edgar Ormsby's heart, each sob gave him misery; dread feelings agitated his breast, yet with a giant power he crushed them, and sought to cheer and comfort his wife.

In a short time she recovered her voice, and raising her eyes with a piteous look, she said:

"Oh, why is it that the doors of society are closed against me and mine, and former friends glance disdainfully upon me? Why am I an outcast from the world and treated like a criminal, as if I were not fit company for honest persons? Oh, it will kill me! I shall die!"

Again the tears started to her eyes, and between her sighs she ejaculated:

"Oh, it is cruel! They sneer at me, they turn their carriages from mine. Oh, Edgar—my Edgar, what does this worse than cruelty mean?"

"I know not, my love; but time will remedy it. Be happy in the possession of our children; our consciences are clear; let the world say what it may, it cannot separate us."

"I know it, dear husband, you are ever kind. I hope I am not childish, but the shock was terrible, terrible!"

She lay upon his breast, and he, lover-like, for he was a lover still, smoothed the hair from her temples, kissed the tear-stained face, meantime murmuring words of encouragement and endearment.

No woman, who loved her husband as Mrs. Ormsby did, could resist the warm, affectionate appeals, and ere long the tears were dried. Looking into his face she said:

"Oh, Edgar, with you I can bear anything; without you the world would soon crush me."

She spoke the truth; she leaned entirely upon him, was guided by him in the smallest affairs of every day life, as well as those of greater magnitude; if his support were taken away she would, indeed, be desolate.

Comparative quiet having been regained, and Mrs. Ormsby having overcome the first intensity of her grief, Florence came and seated herself at her father's side.

"And you, too, my pet, are sad," he said, drawing her to him.

"Not very sad, papa," with a faint smile. "I love home better than I do society; I care not for their whims."

Edgar Ormsby gazed at the child-woman at his

side with an expression of profound love, admiration and pride.

"Such a being," he silently murmured. "So young yet so philosophical, so sensitive yet so practical, so brave yet so innocent, sweet and tender."

In her he saw a woman who would patiently endure, and help him in sorrow, and a child who would love and cheer him. From that hour he regarded her anew; the quality on this day fully developed he prized most highly, and received it as a blessing.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

FRANKLIN, writing to his friend Peter Collison, F.R.S., in 1748, says, "It is amazing to see in how small a portion of glass a great electrical force may lie. A thin glass bubble, about an inch in diameter, weighing only six grains, being half filled with water, partly gilt on the outside, and furnished with a wire hook, gives, when electrified, as great a shock as a man well can bear."

THERE may be an electrical discharge made up of two distinct flashes—a tense flash combined with a burning flame or flash. The first of these is destructive to life; the second singes, scorches, perhaps blinds, but does not necessarily destroy life. In lightning shocks we may see, in the effects produced, the evidence of one or other of these discharges, or of both, on one and the same subject.

THE Emperor of the French has just been witnessing a trial, made at the Tuilleries, of a new cooking apparatus for boiling coffee and cooking provisions. It is heated by petroleum-lamps, and both coffee and meat may be prepared in the course of an hour. The whole may be carried on the back of a mule, and a dinner be dressed as the animal advances on a march.

MR. J. L. SORBY has published a note on the polarisation of the blue light of water—an account of some polarisation experiments made in a boat on the Lake of Geneva. The author finds that, like the blue light of the sky, that of the water is polarised, the plane of polarisation passing through the sun and the axis of the polariscope, the latter provided with a Nicol's prism, and is constructed so that its extremity can be plunged under water.

A NEW FEATHERING SCREW INTRODUCED BY MESSRS. LAIRD AND BROTHERS.—It has long been thought that an efficient means of altering the pitch or feathering the blades of the screw, in a fore and aft direction, would be a great advantage for screw steamers, rendering them less dependent on their steam power, by making them faster and more handy under sail. A screw of the ordinary kind, whether fixed or revolving, is a heavy drag against speed and handiness of sailing; and a lifting screw is a somewhat complicated and costly piece of mechanism. Mr. R. B. BEVIS, managing engineer of the firm of Messrs. Laird Brothers, of Birkenhead, has patented an arrangement for effecting this object, which has just been put to a practical test in the *Kathleen*, a yacht constructed for the Marquis of Downshire by Messrs. Laird Brothers, and the results obtained on trial are so far very satisfactory. The *Kathleen* flies the burgee of the Royal Yacht Squadron, and is of the following dimensions: Length between perpendiculars 140 ft.; width 22 ft.; tonnage 326 tons; and is fitted with a pair of inverted cylinder surface condensing engines of 60-horse power nominal, and has capacity for about seventy tons of coals in her bunkers. Draught of water, 11 ft. abaft, and 8 ft. forward. She is rigged as a fore and aft schooner, with a good spread of canvass. The accommodation for the owners is arranged in a half-poop about 55 ft. long, and there are also additional cabins forward, as well as state-rooms for the officers and a good forecabin for the crew. On the occasion of the trial she had a draught of water of 11 ft. in aft, and 8 ft. in forward, with a displacement of 316 tons, and an area of section of 148 ft. The speed obtained as the mean of runs at the measured mile was 11.27 knots, with an indicated power of 393-horse power, the number of revolutions being 121 per minute. Before making the trial at the measured mile the yacht was taken down as far as the Bell Buoy, where sail was set, the steam shut off, and a short trial made under sail alone, with the blade of the screw feathered into a fore and aft line, the operation of feathering the blades occupying only three or four minutes, and afterwards with the blades fixed to a pitch of 10 ft. It was found that with the screw feathered the yacht not only had a speed of one and a half to two knots more than with the screw fixed, but that she was more lively in coming round. It was thus clearly shown that the drag of the screw not only affected the speed through the water, but prevented the ship working as satisfactorily as she did when the blades of the screw feathered fore and aft, and we look with

interest for reports of farther trials. This arrangement is free from any of the objections which have been made to feathering screws previously tried. The gear for feathering the blades is well protected, being worked in the screw-shaft tunnel by a rod passing through the centre of the shaft, and the levers that move the blades are enclosed within the boss of the screw propeller. This system will be admirably adapted for ships of war, or sailing ships with auxiliary power, where it is as important to have a good result under sail alone as under steam, and we fully expect that it will soon be applied to vessels of this class.

M. H. BIONNE submits the following opinion upon the nature of comets to the Academy of Sciences: "They are bodies which describe spirals originating in a nebula terminating in the sun; each spiral may be considered as an ellipse. Formed of the incandescent matter of the nebula, comets would appear to be the regulators of the grand movement of celestial bodies, the agents of that vast transformation of calorific work into mechanical work, and would come at the end of their course to lose themselves in the atmosphere of the sun, to which they would serve as an aliment."

MERCURY AND SULPHUR.

A few interesting facts in which mercury plays a remarkable part are worth mention. Certain Dutch chemists discovered that plants cannot live in an atmosphere which contains vapour of mercury. Bous-singault, of Paris, found that this noxious effect could be neutralised by introducing sulphur into the atmosphere; and farther, that sulphur, when exposed to vapour of mercury, takes on a coat which resembles iron, and does not easily rub off, or soil the fingers. This coat is sulphure of mercury.

Here, therefore, is a suggestion which may be turned to account by enterprising artists. Let them melt sulphur, and cast it into statuettes, friezes, mouldings, flowers, and so forth, expose them to vapour of mercury, and they will obtain a number of articles, all wearing a metallic appearance, which may be found useful for ornamental purposes.

The French chemist, taking a wide view of the subject, asks whether sulphur, which is at times found in the atmosphere, may not play an important part in neutralising the effects of noisome vapours, or the deleterious miasma which rises from marshes and banks of rivers in hot countries. And may we not ask whether it will ever be found possible to stay the progress of an epidemic by flooding the atmosphere with fumes of sulphur?

M. MEISENS noticed that when a ball is allowed to fall into water from some height it carries with it into the water a volume of air twenty times the size of the ball. This air, it seems, accompanies the ball in its descent, no matter to what depth, and is only set free when the ball strikes the bottom. Marriotte, it would appear, has made the same observation, and has remarked that every drop of rain as it falls draws along with it a volume of air two or three times its own size, a fact which he thought would account for the light wind felt near where a shower is falling.

INFLUENCE OF THE MOON.—Mr. R. H. PATTERSON says that Professor Palmieri, who has so closely studied the phenomena of Vesuvius, declares that there is a perceptible relation between the phases of the moon and the developments of volcanic action. Anyone who has lived in the South, or even sailed in the Mediterranean, may have noticed how carefully sleepers in the open air guard their heads and faces against the rays of the moon, to avert ophthalmia and other ills. In India meat exposed to the moon-rays immediately putrefies. The moon's influence produces tides and currents in the atmosphere just as it does in the ocean. Some of these facts indicate a lunar action more subtle than science can yet account for.

M. DEBRAY has sent an interesting note to the French Academy on the decomposition of chloride of iron when heated to 70 deg. Cent. It has been long known that this and other iron solutions become much darker when heated. The author finds that the salt has undergone a profound change. It no longer gives Prussian blue with the yellow ferrocyanide, but only a pale greenish blue precipitate, and solutions of common salt cause a gelatinous precipitate of sesquioxide of iron. Submitted to dialysis, the dark coloured liquid lets hydrochloric acid pass, and yields soluble oxide of iron. It would appear that at 70 deg. or thereabouts, chloride of iron is decomposed into hydrochloric acid and soluble oxide of iron (the colloidal oxide of iron first observed by Professor Graham). It is another case of dissociation.

DR. RICHARDSON has been conducting a series of experiments with the huge induction coil at the Polytechnic. He finds that the spark from the coil itself, which measures 29 inches in length, has no injurious effect when directed against a living body.

A pigeon was experimented upon, having been first put to sleep by bichloride of methylene. It was connected by the foot with the negative pole of the coil, and one or two discharges sent through the body. There was a general muscular contraction at each discharge, but the heart's action and respiration remained perfectly healthy. In fact, the bird was perfectly uninjured, save as to the feathers, which, strange to say, were somewhat singed. A toad also passed the same course with satisfactory results. The escape of the animals in these cases is due to the ready course of the current over their bodies. In fact, the body internally is not traversed by the current at all, but is surrounded by it.

TESTING ARMOUR PLATES.—The armour plates, each 5 in. thick, manufactured by Charles Cammell and Co., Sheffield, for the Austrian Government, were tested on board the *Thunderer*. The one plate was made in the ordinary way, the other was made up of three thicknesses, by placing an armour plate 4 in. thick, between two thinner plates, and rolling them down to the required thickness of 5 in. The object of the test, in addition to ascertaining the figure of merit to which each plate would be entitled, was to learn in what respect, if any, the one plate would differ from the other after being submitted to the ordinary test for such plates—viz., four shots from the 8 in. smoothbore gun at 30 ft. range. It was remarkable to see how closely the one plate resembled the other after the tests had been made, the greatest indentations being 2.5 in. and 2.4 in. respectively, while the bulge in the back in both instances were 3 in. over an area of 2 ft. 3 in. and 2 ft. 4 in. respectively. It was clearly established that there was practically no difference in the merits of either plate, and both will receive a high classification.

At the quarterly "communication" of the United Grand Lodge of Freemasons, held on 19th inst., it was stated that the Prince of Wales had joined the fraternity, having been made a mason by the King of Sweden. The rank of P. G. M. is at once to be conferred upon his Royal Highness.

PUBLIC MONUMENTS.—A vote of 2,800, on account of the Wellington monument is to be proposed to the House of Commons this session. The original estimate for the monument was 14,000*l.*; 10,266*l.* had been expended upon it up to the end of 1868, leaving 3,734*l.* to be still voted. A vote will also be proposed of 667*l.* towards the erection of a monument in Westminster Abbey to the memory of Lord Palmerston. The estimate for this monument is 2,000*l.*; 1,333*l.* had been expended up to the end of 1868; the present vote, therefore, will complete the estimated amount.

A SINGULAR STORY.—The following facts, if not authenticated beyond dispute, would scarcely be credited. On Oct. 1, 1867, a Blackburn manufacturer procured from the Manchester and County Bank, Manchester, in payment of cheque, 400*l.*, of which five 20*l.* Bank of England notes formed a part. These five 20*l.* notes were paid to a Blackburn yarn agent, and by him handed over to his spinner. On reaching home, a little beyond Colne, the spinner gave the notes to his father, who was also his partner, and the payment was duly entered in the cash book at the mill. The old gentleman did not keep a private cash-book, but simply deposited the money where many thousands had been placed before, and for the time thought no more about it. A short time ago a man, with a gipsy physiognomy, along with a child about ten years of age, called at the house of the spinner, soliciting charity. Compassion was excited, the man and child were fed, a pair of trousers was given to the former, and from the wardrobe of the spinner's daughter the child received ample contributions. On the same evening the man returned, saying he had found in the lining of the trousers a 20*l.* note, which he handed to his benefactor. The man was rewarded for his honesty, and went away rejoicing. The fact of the 20*l.* having turned up so strangely was told to the police-officer stationed there, and he in turn told the circumstances to the police-sergeant at Colne. Unfortunately, our hero of the raven locks and olive complexion now assumed another character, and the romantic incident which told so well for him was altogether changed. The fact is, he found in the pocket of the trousers not one, but five 20*l.* notes, and report says, though this might not be true, finding he could not get them changed, he offered them as flash notes at 3*d.* each, and yet was unable to part with them. He then thought he could ascertain what the notes really were by taking back one, and finding out its value the worth of the other notes would then also be known. Shortly after the man had discovered that the notes were genuine he was seen in Colne, and he got very drunk. He purchased at Nelson a quarter of a pound of tobacco, and tendered a 20*l.* note, which, after some precaution on the part of the shop-

man, was cashed. Being now in funds and in the height of his hilarity, he ordered a pair of trousers to be made for himself, bought shawls for the child, and, in short, squandered right and left the money he had so strangely obtained. It is believed by the police that one of the 20*l*. notes was used for lighting a pipe; but, as the number is known, if it has been destroyed the value can be recovered. The man was taken into custody, and the case has been heard before the magistrates at Colne. The cashier of the County Bank proved the identity of the notes recovered; the facts above stated were sworn to by other witnesses; but, as the man pleaded "Guilty," the case was summarily treated. He was sentenced to seven days' imprisonment in Preston House of Correction. The money recovered to the spinner amounts to a little over 64*l*.

THE PROPHECY.

BY THE

Author of "Oliver Darrel," "Michel-dever," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

LINWOOD was in a desperate state. The consequences of his crime against Violet seemed to be coiling around him like an anaconda. Driven to bay, he resolved to play a desperate game. In his confidence was a young man of impoverished condition, but good family, named William Beresford, the nephew of Sir William Beresford. This young man had become a confirmed gambler, and had for years been Linwood's ally in fleecing victims at the gaming table. It was arranged that he should marry Violet, and divide such portion of the estate as Linwood's extravagance had left. This plot was conceived from Mrs. Linwood and Mrs. Brent, who were induced to suppose that Linwood had repented of his evil courses.

Letters were at once dispatched to Mr. Melrose, in which Linwood gave an artful account of alleged reasons for Violet's abandonment, and stating that she was a great heiress, who, on marrying without his consent, would forfeit her fortune. This letter arrived on the same day that Charles Lennox's did, which, it will be remembered, stated the conditions of old Mrs. Falconer's will, and also that the destined bride was then living in London.

These letters occasioned a great commotion in the Melrose family. The wedding, which was to have come off in a week, was indefinitely postponed, much against the wishes of the young couple; and Mr. Melrose, Harry, and Violet soon started for London, to meet the Linwoods.

On meeting Mr. and Mrs. Linwood, Violet was cordially received, and so were Harry and his father. Mrs. Linwood and Mrs. Brent were devoted to Violet; and Linwood so completely deceived the father and son, that Harry left with the full assurance that, on his return, he should marry Violet with her uncle's consent.

But as soon as he was gone, Linwood began to play his game. He first informed Mrs. Linwood that news had come to young Beresford that his uncle had died, and left him heir to the baronetcy and £40,000 a year. He then introduced "Sir William Beresford," as he called the young gambler, to his board, and made him a welcome guest. Beresford became a lion in society and a favourite with the ladies. He paid assiduous court to Violet, and finally proposed to her, but was rejected.

Linwood set sail in a pleasure-boat with his wife, Violet, and Beresford, one pleasant afternoon, for his water-side estate. But a violent squall came up, the boat was wrecked and driven out to sea, Mrs. Linwood was drowned; and after many days of floating helplessly about, Linwood, Beresford, and Violet were rescued by a vessel bound for Havre. Violet overheard a conversation between Linwood and Beresford, and so did Captain Escars, the commander of the vessel, which revealed the compact between them as to forcing Violet to marry. The captain and his wife, who was aboard, sympathised with Violet, and got up a *ruse*, whereby it was supposed Violet was becoming imbecile on account of her sufferings on the wreck, and that she finally committed suicide by jumping overboard—the fact being that the captain had hidden her in the hold of the vessel.

On arriving in Havre, Linwood had an account of the wreck, the rescue, and the suicide of Violet published in the papers, which was widely copied in England, and in the meanwhile Violet was herself returning with her friends to her native land, in the hope that she would arrive at her old home in time to attend the wedding of Rose Whitney and her devoted beau, Mr. Phillips.

In the meanwhile Harry Melrose had seen Charles Lennox, learned the state of affairs; also that his alleged cousin was Fantasia; had seen her and Ashford; had found Fantasia beautiful and bewitching; and was heartily discouraged at all the complications which beset him.

Fantasia was unwilling to deceive Harry, or be a party to any deception; but her father told her of Beresford's having to marry Violet, and that she would not long remain Fantasia's rival. To this the latter said:

"Why shall I not act in good faith with you? All is at an end between Charles Lennox and myself. If he persists in marrying me he will become a pauper, and I have no fortune to give him in exchange for the independence he must relinquish to win me. My life with you is becoming unbearable, and if Violet is separated from Harry—if he turns to me in his desertion, I will not refuse him. I can at least bestow fortune upon him, if I cannot give him such love as I know now I am capable of feeling."

Ashford laughed, and carelessly said:

"I understand what all those fine words mean. You wish to give Melrose the right to twenty thousand a year, and at the same time secure your own interest in his fortune. I don't blame you, for you would not be my daughter if you did not estimate money at its true value. Master Harry shall not become Falconer of the Nest, without paying the man who helped him to secure his inheritance."

Fantasia listened with a weary, sick feeling; but there was bitter contempt in her tone as she said:

"I do not expect you to do justice to my feelings on this subject, or even to comprehend them. Since I am your daughter, it had been better for me, perhaps, if I resembled you more in some respects than I do. If Harry Melrose seeks me, you must settle with him the terms on which your consent is to be given. I will have nothing to do with the robbery you contemplate; for with your anxiety to bring about this marriage, it is nothing less when you ask a price for your consent."

She left the room before her father could reply, and he sat staring at the door which had closed on her, till the servant came in and told him that a gentleman wished to see him.

Ashford gathered up the papers which had been prepared with such labour and care, and went into the little parlour, where he found Harry Melrose.

Ashford assumed his most gentlemanly bearing, and after welcoming the young man, said:

"Fanny tells me that she and you renewed your old friendship last night. I was glad to hear it, and I am really most happy to be able to welcome you among us again."

Harry briefly thanked him, and added:

"I am sure that Fanny has no truer friend than I am prepared to be to her."

"There is only one way in which you can befriend her, Mr. Melrose; and by walking in the path of fate you can serve your own interests even more than hers. You came hither this morning to inspect the proofs of the relationship that exists between us, and I am willing to submit them to the most rigid scrutiny. In this package are the love-letters that passed between my parents before their marriage; here is the certificate of my adoption by the gentleman who educated me, and bestowed his own name upon me."

Harry glanced at the certificate, and then said:

"Before looking over these papers, Mr. Ashford, I must state to you that I am in no position to derive any benefit from the information gained from them. My hand is already pledged to the adopted daughter of my father, and my affections are fixed on her. If I had been aware of the decease of Mrs. Lennox, and that will she had made, I should not have come hither at all. I shall write to my father to-day, and I shall only await his reply to relinquish all interest in the Falconer succession, and return to claim my promised bride."

Ashford waved his hand, and said:

"Read my proofs, if you please, and weigh them well. After that we will talk of your own affairs."

The young man lifted the discoloured package of letters, and untied the faded ribbon that bound them together.

Harry soon laid the letters aside, and said:

"I am quite satisfied that Fantasia is the cousin my kinswoman was so anxious for me to marry. I only wish that I could claim the estate, endow her with half of it, and give her to one who can make her far happier than I could, even if no obstacle intervened to our union. In my house she shall find a home."

"You are very liberal, I am sure; but you can afford to be so in the prospect of so wealthy a marriage as you expect to make. I am sorry to hint to you that your footing in that quarter is not so secure as you believe, and after giving up a certainty here you may find your hopes disappointed there."

"What do you mean? What can you know of Violet, or her family? and by what authority do you speak in this manner?" asked Harry, with sudden fire.

"Do not become excited, my young friend. I know a great deal about Louis Linwood. I have made it my business to seek out a clue to the family of the child so mysteriously left at my door, and at last I found them out. By what means I have succeeded I need not now explain. It is sufficient that

I was successful. But for my agency, Violet would never have been acknowledged by her friends."

Harry listened in silent amazement to his statements. When Ashford ceased speaking, he asked:

"What is the name of the young gentleman; and what claims has he on Mr. Linwood, that I am to be sacrificed to him?"

"He has the claim of a friendship of long standing. William Beresford has been his gambling associate through many successful seasons. He is a man of good family, and if an elder brother and two cousins would be accommodating enough to die, he would be a baronet, with a fine rent-roll."

"If I thought that were possible—but no, it is not. I wrong Violet by even listening to such a suggestion. This Beresford can be nothing to her, and her uncle cannot be so base as to ask her to marry a man with such antecedents; a gambler—a man living by his wits, as young men of his stamp are apt to do. If I believed my betrothed in danger of falling a victim to his powers of fascination, I would return on the next steamer, and insist on the fulfilment of Mr. Linwood's pledges to me."

"It would be more judicious to wait till you hear from your father. You cannot act in the business that brought you hither without his sanction, and in my opinion he will be more anxious to see you in possession of your family estate than to have you marry Violet, even if that were a certainty."

"You know my father very little, if you think that. He would be glad to see me regain my paternal inheritance, but if it were to be won through dishonour, he would disdain to allow me to accept it."

"We will try and make time pass as pleasantly to you as possible," was Ashford's reply. "My daughter and I are thinking of a brief tour in France, and it will be a pleasant diversion for you to see something of life. I shall be most happy if you would join us in our tour."

"Thank you; I will think of it, and it is probable that I will accept your invitation. I wish to see Paris; I shall enjoy the trip much more than if I went alone."

"If you will bring your letter to me after it is written, I will enclose in the envelope a copy of the certificate of my adoption by Mr. Ashford; and if you will allow me, I will send it," said Ashford, as his guest was leaving.

"Thank you," was the unsuspicious reply. "I shall be much obliged. I will bring it you this evening."

Harry's letter was written, and placed in the hands of Ashford, but the original was never sent. The clever schemer knew that as soon as Mrs. Melrose learned that he claimed to be the son of Mrs. Hurst, she would know how false the fabrication was, as that lady had but one child, who was a daughter.

Judging Mr. Melrose by his own low standard, Ashford believed that when Harry was once in possession of the fortune which lawfully belonged to him, his father would permit the fraud by which it had been won to pass unquestioned. It could do no good to attempt to expose it, and he would cover his son's wife with infamy by proving that she had married him as an imposter. Ashford was playing a desperate game.

So far as Violet was concerned, the schemer felt certain that her uncle's intentions were to break off the marriage between Harry and his ward, and coax or force her into a union with Beresford.

Beresford had boasted among his associates of the brilliant prospects which lay before him—a lovely and richly dowered bride. This could be no other than Violet; and having little faith in the constancy of women, Ashford believed that an elegant and accomplished man of the world would soon rival poor Harry, and induce her to send him adrift. The first letter that came to him from his betrothed would probably end the delusion in which Harry now lived.

With these convictions, Ashford did not hesitate to make himself master of the contents of the missive confided to his hands. Harry gave him the envelope unsealed, that the promised certificate might be placed in it, never dreaming that Ashford would be so dishonourable as to read what he had written to his father.

The letter was voluminous, for every detail which he thought would interest those at home was given. He spoke of his surprise at finding in them their old neighbours of the Vale, but did not express a doubt as to the validity of the proof submitted to his inspection. His description of Fantasia brought a smile to the lips of the reader, and he muttered:

"The lad is more than half in love with her already. I will have them safely married before Melrose can possibly interfere."

While Harry promenaded on the sands with Fantasia, charmed by her more than he would have been willing to admit, Ashford employed himself in indicating the following epistle, which was sent in place of the one which had been given to him.

"Brighton, August 24th, 18—.

"DEAR FATHER,—Do not be alarmed at seeing that

these lines are written in a hand that is unfamiliar to you. I am not well enough to make the effort to write myself, so I have employed a friend to do so for me; but I beg that you will not be uneasy about me, for I shall be out now in a few days, and then I will write to you myself, giving you an account of all my adventures since we parted.

"Nothing serious is the matter with me. Sea-sickness prostrated me on the voyage. My physician sent me to this place for the benefit of sea-bathing, and here I found the young cousin who would have been my bride but for my engagement to Violet.

"Charles Lennox, who is a very clever fellow, came hither with me, and brought Mr. Ashe to see me. He and his daughter have been very attentive to me, and I find her a very charming person. She and Lennox are attached to each other, and I think that I shall find little difficulty in effecting a compromise, by relinquishing half the estate to them. Mrs. Lennox died before I reached London, but her decease will not materially affect the settlement I hope to make.

"Fanny Ashe is a lovely creature, and if I had not been bound to Violet, I must inevitably have fallen in love with her. Both she and her father have been very kind to me, and I feel as if I had known them all my life.

"I am going with them for a brief tour to France, and I hope on my return to find a long letter from you, telling me of all that has occurred at Melrose since I left. Send your reply under cover to Messrs. Sheldon, Lincoln's Inn, London, as I have employed them as my solicitors, and they will know where to forward my letters to me, if I am not upon the spot at the time of their arrival.

"With kindest love to my dear grandmother, I am your affectionate son, HARRY MELROSE."

Ashford enclosed this in the envelope given him by Harry, and posted it.

After spending three days very agreeably at Brighton, their arrangements for the brief tour the party contemplated were settled, and they set out for London. Until the moment in which he spoke of this trip, Ashford had not thought of making it, but he now rejoiced in the inspiration which induced him to propose it.

When Lennox heard of the contemplated trip, he grew pale, and set his teeth hard together, for the thought of young Melrose thrown daily with Harry was bitter to him. He believed she would fascinate him in spite of himself, for he considered his idol irresistible. He thought:

"It is but the beginning of the end. I shall lose, and he will win both love and fortune. But why should I grudge this noble young fellow what is beyond my own reach? I am denied the power to give my love either home or fortune; and if Harry Melrose takes her from me, he will at least try to make her happy. I will be generous enough to rejoice in their prosperity, hard as it will be to give her up."

Acting on this determination, Lennox received Harry, on his return to London, with the friendship of a brother.

Just before they parted, Harry said:

"How sorry I am that your aunt made such a will. But for that, I could have given Fanny half of the Falconer property as her dower, and have rendered you both happy."

"If I knew how to labour for a living, I would throw up my legacy, take Fantasia to my heart in spite of her father's opposition, and fight the battle of life with her and for her. Yet why do I talk so foolishly? She is not fitted to be a poor man's helpmate, and, heaven help me! I should never be able to win bread enough to keep us from want."

"With the assistance of friends, perhaps you might be put in the way of earning more than that," said Harry, with some hesitation. "If your would accept—"

"Say no more, my dear Melrose, I entreat. You would only make two people more miserable than they now are, by helping to chain them down to a life to which neither of them are fitted. I have no faculty for business; I should hate the necessity that drove me to it, and I should only make a miserable failure."

Harry felt the deepest sympathy for him, but he could do nothing for one who repelled all offers of assistance, and he felt that what Lennox said was true—he was unfitted, both by nature and education, to enter the arena of life at twenty-eight years of age, and win success. His habits were fixed, and they were those of a gentleman of leisure, with refined tastes and sufficient means. Take these from him, and he would be miserable, even if the object of his affections were given in exchange for them.

When they parted Lennox wrung Harry's hand and said:

"Let what will happen, Melrose, believe that I shall always be your friend and hers."

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

The letter sent to Violet would probably have shared the fate of the one addressed to Mr. Melrose, if it had been permitted to pass through the hands

of Ashford; as Harry preferred sending that to its destination himself, it went safely, though it met with no better fate than the other.

A most agreeable month was passed, chiefly in Paris, by our party of travellers, but excursions were made to various points of interest, and Harry acknowledged that he was having a most delightful tour, in spite of his separation from his betrothed.

Day by day Fantasia developed some new power to charm, and if Harry had been heart-whole, he would doubtless have yielded to her fascinations. But he did not dream of falsehood to her he had chosen, and amid the whirl of engagements and sight-seeing in which he lived, he thought of Violet hourly, and yearned for the moment to arrive in which he could hope for a letter from her.

At the time drew near when a reply to his own communications might be expected, Melrose became restless, and anxious to return to London. Ashford pleaded for a delay of two days, as there was to be a grand military review which he declared himself anxious to see. After much demur on Harry's part, this was conceded, at Fantasia's request, and they remained till it was over.

The interval allowed time to Ashford to receive a package of letters forwarded to him by his agent in London. Among them were two for Harry, and he did not hesitate to violate the seals of both, though it was so deftly done that no one would have been able to detect the fact that they had been tampered with.

The contents of Violet's missive were such as to fill him with joy. It was a sort of journal with such things jotted down from day to day as she thought would amuse and interest her betrothed. She gave a vivid picture of the gay life she was leading, and betrayed the innocent joy of a young and inexperienced girl who suddenly finds herself placed upon a pedestal and worshipped as a sort of divinity.

Beresford's name occurred frequently, and it was evident that he was her constant companion and attendant.

There was a postscript, written in a hand that was evident tremulous from agitation, which caused Ashford to grin like a satyr.

It ran thus:

"I have just read over your letter written at Brighton, and it is evident to me that you regret the entanglement which prevents you from securing your inheritance by offering your hand to the cousin you so glowingly describe. I have also a debt of gratitude to the Ashfords which I cannot better pay than by relinquishing all claims on you, and allowing you to fulfil the prophecy in which your grandmother had such faith."

"I give you back your freedom, Harry, and bid you forget all that has passed between us. I shall not break my heart over our rupture, and you will console yourself with Fantasia. Remember me to her, and permit me to hope that in the future you will both regard me as a tenderly beloved sister."

"VIOLET."

Ashford carefully resealed the epistle, muttering: "This will serve my turn perfectly. Linwood and I are playing into each other's hands as deftly as if we were in league with each other. He intends to marry the girl to Beresford, and he is as unscrupulous as I am as to the means he adopts to accomplish his ends. So much the better for me. With such an ally, I am certain of success."

He then opened the letter of Mr. Melrose, and found, as was to be expected, that he was greatly alarmed as to the supposed condition of Harry's health. He read over the details of home news very carefully, and then sat down to manufacture such a counterfeit as would be likely to impose on the young man.

"Melrose, September 12th, 18—."

"MY DEAR HARRY,—An accident to my right hand, while out with my gun a few days ago, prevents me from writing to you at any length. The wound is not a serious one, though my hand is still bound up, and of course unfit for use. I am compelled to employ an amanuensis, which I regret, as I have something to say to you which may pain you."

"The sacrifice you have made up your mind to will be useless, so far as Violet is concerned; for I have a few lines from her renouncing you, and insisting that you shall not mar your fortunes by refusing to accept the bride decreed to you by fate."

"I am sorry to say such a thing of Violet, but I am afraid that her head has been completely turned by the flattery of which she has been the object, and she has conceived the foolish ambition of becoming an aristocrat through her marriage with her uncle's bosom friend, young Beresford."

"It was a surprise to me to learn that our old neighbour Ashford is the grandson of Mr. Falconer, and I cannot imagine why he did not reveal his relationship after the decease of the old man. However, he did not like me much, and I suppose that he did not care to make known that he was my kinsman."

"Now that so much is at stake for yourself and his daughter, he will lay aside that old grudge, and use

his influence to bring about a union between yourself and Fantasia. I remember her as a charming child, and I am quite ready to receive her in the place of the ungrateful girl who has so readily deserted us. Violet is lost to us, and if my wishes have any weight with you, you will take such measures as must speedily put you in possession of the family estate, which I own I am deeply anxious to see in your possession."

"Your grandmother sends many messages of affection to you, and Rose desires to be kindly remembered."

Your affectionate father,

"CLEMENT MELROSE."

The genuine letter was burned, and this one slipped into the envelope, which was then carefully resealed, and the two were sent to Harry's room to await his return from an excursion with Fantasia and Mrs. Peck.

It was late in the evening when they came back in gay spirits; and when supper was over, Harry said:

"This is our last night in Paris. I am almost sorry that we must leave so soon, anxious as I am to hear from my friends. By the time we can get back to London, my letters will be awaiting me."

Ashford smilingly said:

"I would not tell you before you had partaken of supper, lest the news should destroy your appetite, but your letters have already arrived. I ordered them to be forwarded under cover to me, and they are now in your apartment awaiting inspection."

Harry arose quickly, and said:

"I owe you thanks for this kindness, sir. Pray excuse me, and I will go to their perusal at once."

He seized on Violet's letter first, and threw himself upon a seat to read the sweet messages of love he believed within it, more entirely at his ease.

His brow knit, and a cloud gradually gathered over his expressive face as he read her account of the gay life she was leading at Newport. At the name of Beresford he savagely ground his teeth, and muttered a few words that were by no means complimentary to that person.

But when the postscript came, which was evidently written in reply to his own letter, he sat dumb with rage and wounded feeling.

He tried to recall what he had said to her in his last letter, and he felt sure that there was nothing to bring about such a rupture as this. He could not once have believed it of her, but he was forced to conclude that Violet was as light of nature as she was lovely in person. She was evidently smitten with the desire to become Lady Beresford, and he savagely swore to himself that he would be no bar to her ambition.

After reading over her letter twice, he took up that which he supposed was from his father. If any confirmation had been wanting as to the fact of Violet's fickleness, it was afforded by the lines over which his eyes rapidly ran, and Harry sunk back overcome by the sudden and unexpected blight which had fallen on his fond dream of love. How highly he had estimated her—how deeply he had been attached to her, he never knew till this hour in which he was called on to give her up.

He recalled all her childish sweetness, all her winning and lovable characteristics, only to torture himself with the certainty that beneath that charming surface lay no depth of feeling—no power to be constant to the love she had professed.

The few weeks in which they had wandered through the shades of Melrose as betrothed lovers, arose before him—were lived over again, only as a fresh torture to his lacerated heart. In spite of all her pledges, all her professions of undying attachment, she had been false to him as soon as temptation assailed her, and he was not near to claim the fulfilment of the promises she had voluntarily made to him.

Harry slept none that night; he paced his floor through its long and dreary hours, trying to reconcile himself to the heavy blow that had fallen upon him.

He suffered keenly, for he had given deep and tender love to the girl he now believed so faithless, and it was an awful wrench to be forced to tear her from his heart, and place another on the shrine she had so ruthlessly desecrated.

Towards dawn Harry threw himself upon his bed and slept heavily a few hours. When he awoke he rang and ordered his breakfast to be brought to his room, and a few moments later Ashford knocked at his door and asked to be admitted.

With much internal reluctance, Harry bade him come in, and the visitor hastened to say:

"I was afraid you were ill, as you did not come down to breakfast as usual. Now I look at you, I am inclined to think that something very serious must be the matter. You look as if you had passed through some dreadful struggle since last night. Nothing wrong at home, I hope?"

"I have passed through the crisis of my fate," said Harry, gloomily. "Everything is wrong. My father is suffering from a hurt he has received, but he speaks lightly enough on that. He thought more

of the deadly wound he was compelled to inflict on me, than of the one he was suffering from himself. Physical torture one can bear, but anguish of mind such as I have borne within the last few hours, leaves behind a scar that time can never heal."

"My dear young friend, you alarm me. What can have happened to effect you so seriously?"

"A very common thing, I believe," replied Harry, with affected lightness. "You were right about young Beresford. He has proved irresistible to Violet, and she has herself released me from such ties as bound me to her. Of course she assumed perfect freedom for herself as soon as her letter was dispatched to me, and it would not surprise me if the next news I hear from home informs me of her marriage with him. You were wiser than I was, Mr. Ashford, when you foretold such a result. I could not have believed this of her, if her own hand had not penned the words of dismissal."

Ashford looked as sympathetic as if he had not prepared the bitter draught. He said:

"I deeply regret that I have proved so true a prophet. I only judged from my knowledge of women's nature. Mr. Linwood willed that Violet should accept the husband he had accepted for her, and he is not a man to be lightly thwarted."

"If I thought that any undue influence had been used, I would go back at once and demand a reckoning at his hands," cried Harry. "I will not be cheated of my bride through the manoeuvring of her uncle."

With great apparent sincerity, Ashford said:

"I think you will be quite right to do so, if there is anything in Violet's letter to warrant the belief that she will be sacrificed to the wishes of her uncle. From what you said just now, I inferred that she is so much dazzled with the prospect of becoming Lady Beresford that she is quite willing to give you up."

"The letter is filled with the accounts of her triumphs in society, and head and heart are so filled with nonsense and vanity that it is no wonder there is no room left for a regret for the bitter blow she has dealt me. My father, too, must have heard a great deal of her flirtations, for he writes to me as if all must come to an end between us. No; I will not go back to have my heart trampled on, and my pride outraged by this reckless girl. I will speedily prove to her that she has not given me a mortal wound, though her vanity may lead her to suppose me inconsolable for her desertion."

As he spoke he crushed Violet's letter in his hand, and then tore it into fragments. Ashford watched the scattered bits of paper as they fell upon the floor, exulting in his heart at the decision Harry had made, but outwardly grave and sympathetic.

Harry presently said:

"We will not discuss this now, if you please, Mr. Ashford. My father's wishes evidently point the same way yours do; and the time will come when I can act on his advice. Your daughter and myself have both suffered from a bitter disappointment, and we may, in the future, decide to console each other, and secure the good fortune predicted for us if we are united. I am ready now for my fate, but I must have time to get over this unexpected blow. A few weeks hence, if Fantasia will listen to me, I will ask her to give me the right to my paternal inheritance, by bestowing her hand upon me."

At this moment the waiter came in with Harry's breakfast, and Ashford pressed his hand warmly, and said:

"I will leave you now, my young friend. Solitude is the best panacea for such heart troubles as have assailed you; but after the struggle is over, I shall hope to see you among us again, strengthened by the victory you have won over yourself."

Harry faintly returned the pressure of his hand, and felt as if he were released from an incubus when Ashford left him. He drank a small portion of the coffee brought to him, but found that he had no appetite for solid food. When that was accomplished, he sat down and wrote a few lines to Fantasia, which were left upon the table to be taken to her after his own departure.

"FANTASIA.—Your father will tell you what has occurred, and you will also learn from him that no obstacle now intervenes to a union between us, unless it is raised by yourself."

"I will not deceive you, Fanny—I should be unworthy to claim you, if I did. I loved Violet with all the strength of my nature, and I fell crushed by her heartless and precipitate desertion; but a reaction must soon come. I will not suffer myself to be made permanently miserable by one so unworthy of regret."

"I am going away for a season, that in solitude I may regain control over myself, and cease to mourn the loss of one who has proved herself so unworthy of the love I gave her. We have both suffered, Fantasia; we would have evaded the fate decreed to us, but the weird sisters have proved too strong for us, and nothing is left us now but to accept our destiny, and make the best of it. I believe you esteem and like me, and I should have loved you as dearly

as in my boyhood, but for the glamour thrown over me by her who has proved so false to me. I will tear her from my heart, and place within the desecrated shrine a purer and nobler object of worship, if you will also forget the one you have preferred, and share with me the prosperity we can secure by our union."

"I shall bury myself in some secluded retreat till I am in a fit state to present myself before you again. Let no efforts be made to follow me, or to discover whither I have gone. I must fight my battle alone, and when I have conquered peace, I will return to you, cured of my past folly and ready to appreciate the great good fortune that, I hope, will await me in claiming you as the companion of my future life."

"H. MELROSE."

Harry took the train for Versailles, and sought lodgings in a picturesque cottage in the vicinity of the town, which he had observed in one of his excursions thither. The proprietor was a small landholder, and his family consisted of himself, his elderly wife, and a widowed niece who lived with them.

The quiet of the place suited the feelings of the lodger, and the apartment furnished him was comfortable enough; but after a few days his impatient soul rebelled against the monotony in which he had hoped to regain peace.

He made a flying trip to Munich, and amid the objects of art collected there, tried to find oblivion for the wearing anguish that preyed upon his soul. The image of Violet would not be exorcised. It arose before him at every turn, and in his dreams she came to him, wearing a reproachful look, and saying:

"I am not false. Be just to me, if fate divides us."

Harry did not sleep much in that restless and miserable time, but he could not close his eyes in fitful slumber without the vision of that sad face coming to him, and the echo of those pitiful words sounding through his brain. At times they almost maddened him, and at length he suddenly took the resolution to return to his native land, and satisfy himself of the perfidy of her he found it so hard to give up, before he so irrevocably sealed his fate by his union with Fantasia.

(To be continued.)

FACETIÆ.

THEY have got to growing chickens so large in Massachusetts, that farmers have to sell them by the quarter, like pork. These are chickens to crow over.

A FRENCH paper asks the following riddle: "Why is the Prince of Wales like fifteen shillings?—Because he wants a crown to make him a sovereign."

THE following advertisement recently appeared: "If Samuel Bibb will call or write to &c., &c., he will hear of something to his advantage. His wife is no more."

THERE'S THE RUB.—"Plain-faced girls should dress plainly," remarks a lady of authority on fashion. Was there ever a young lady who was willing to admit that she had a plain face?

A SAN FRANCISCO newspaper says they catch salmon "which weigh over two hundred pounds apiece in the Bay of San Francisco!" How much do they weigh out of that bay?

TALL TREES.—There are trees so tall in Missouri that it takes two men and a boy to look to the top of them. One looks till he gets tired, and another commences where he left off.

"DR. PARR," said a young student once to the old linguist, "let's you and I write a book." "Very well," replied the doctor; "put in all that I know, and all that you don't know, and we'll make a big one."

CREDIT IN HEAVEN.

A POOR Scotsman put a crown piece into the plate in an Edinburgh church, on a Sunday morning, by mistake, instead of a penny, and asked to have it back, but was refused. In once, in for ever.

"Aweel, aweel," grunted Sandy, "I'll get credit for it in heaven."

"Na, na," said the church elder, "ye'll get credit only for the penny ye meant to give."

At a restaurant in the Boulevard de Strasbourg, a placard has been affixed to the window informing the public that excellent *déjeuners* may be had for 75 centimes, and dinners for one franc. A wag has written underneath, "Important notice! The doctor and chemist are next door!"

MR. SPURGEON, the other day, was scolding certain of his followers who declined to interfere in politics on the ground that they were "not of this world." This, he argued, was mere metaphor. "You might as well," he said, "be sheep of the Lord, decline to eat a mutton chop on the plea that it would be cannibalism."

"LOST." The Thames and its Tributaries. Whoever has found the same, and will restore it to W.

H. Royston, Harrison's Hotel, Brighton, shall receive one pound reward." Such is an advertisement appearing recently in the *Times*. At the first blush it looks like a loss of the most awful and tremendous character, threatening a whole district with the loss of its aqueous fluid, but one is wondrously relieved by finding this notice at the end: "Second vol., half-bound calf," from which we conclude that it is a book and not a river that is lost.

SPELLING.

The first day a little boy went to school, the teacher asked him if he could spell.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, how do you spell boy?"

"Oh, just as other folks do."

A CAREFUL farmer had a country cousin call upon him. "John," said he to his son, "don't give Cousin Simon's horses too many oats; you know they have hay." "Yeth, sir," said John moving towards the barn. "And hark ye, John, don't give them too much hay; you know they have oats."

A TRADESMAN of Zurich publishes the following advertisement in a journal of that town: "Wishing to put an end to my life, which is a burden to me, and being determined to die as soon as possible, I shall sell my goods at such low rates as have never been heard of."

PREJUDICED JUDGES.

A model criminal was tried in Paris lately. Being asked if he had anything to say, he replied:

"Yes; a good deal. In the first place, I object to the judges."

"To the judges?"

"Yes, the judges."

"You mean the jury?"

"Nothing of the kind; I mean the judges—all the judges of France."

"Impossible!"

"It is not impossible, but a fact."

"And on what grounds?"

"Because they are prejudiced against me."

Judge (severely): "Prisoner, you must not say such things. No judge in France is prejudiced against anyone."

"Well, I don't know about that," replied the prisoner; "but you must know as well as I do that they have already condemned me five times."

A CURATE who adopted a monotonous whine in his prayers, on being remonstrated with by his diocesan, pleaded that such a tone was very proper in acts of supplication, because beggars always assumed a whine when they asked for alms. The bishop replied: "Yes; but when they do, I always know they are imposters, and give them nothing."

A PAT REPLY.—Lord J. Russell endeavoured to persuade Lord Langdale to resign the permanent Mastership of the Rolls for the uncertain position of Lord Chancellor, and paid the learned lord very high compliments on his talents and acquisitions. "It is useless talking, my lord," said Langdale. "So long as I enjoy the Rolls, I care nothing for your butler."

SECOND CHILDHOOD.

Gentleman (who has hired a Hibernian hack): "Why, I thought you called him 'The Colt'?"

Outler: "Sure, and that's the name he's had for the last twenty years, and he sticks to it, like a respectable baste, the same as your honour."

"TOMMY, my son, fetch in a stick of wood." "Ah! my dear mother," responded the youth, "the grammatical portion of your education has been sadly neglected. You should have said: 'Thomas, my son, transport from that recumbent collection of combustible material upon the threshold of this edifice one of the curtailed excrecences of a defunct log.'"

AN anecdote is related of M. Vivier, who was recently invited by the Emperor to pass several days with him at the camp at Châlons. On the arrival of Vivier the Emperor turned to his aide-de-camps and said: "Gentlemen, here is M. Vivier, take him and treat him as if he were at home!" M. Vivier responded: "Pardon, sire, I would much rather not be treated as I am at home!" M. Vivier is evidently a married man.

A CHEAP WATCH.—A sailor went to a watchmaker and presenting a small French watch to him, wished to know how much the repair of it would come to. The watchmaker, after examining it, said, "It will be more expense repairing than its original cost."—"I don't mind that," said the tar, "I will even give you double the original cost, for I gave a fellow a blow on the head for it, and if you repair it I will give you two."

A NAVAL OFFICER, relating his feats to a marshal, said: "In a sea-fight he had killed three hundred men with his own hand." "And I," said the marshal, "descended through a chimney, in Switzerland."

visit a pretty girl." "How could that be," said the captain, "since there are no chimneys in the country?" "What, sir!" said the marshal. "I have allowed you to kill three hundred men in a fight, and surely you may permit me to descend a chimney in Switzerland."

STATISTICS.

THE number of persons taken into custody last year by the metropolitan police, it appears from a return was 66,870. Of this number, 45,848 were men or boys, and 21,022 women or girls. Of the total, 27,900 were discharged by the magistrates; 34,727 summarily disposed of or held to bail; and 4,324 committed for trial. The "drunk and disorderly" cases numbered 10,403.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

SUNFLOWER SEED TEA—A REMEDY FOR SUMMER COMPLAINTS.—A tea made of the seeds of the sunflower, roasted like coffee berries, is an admirable remedy for all species of summer complaint. A half pint of the seed is sufficient. It should be remembered, however, that serious results often follow the too sudden stoppage of diarrhoea by astringents, and with this, as all remedies of a similar nature, caution should be used.

CHANGING CLOTHING.—Many persons lose life every year by an injudicious change of clothing, and the principles involved need repetition almost every year. If clothing is to be diminished, it should be done in the morning, when first dressing. Additional clothing may be put on at any time. Woollen flannel ought to be worn next the person, by all, during the whole year, but a thinner material may be worn after the first of June. A blazing fire should be kept in every family room until ten in the morning, and rekindled again an hour before sundown, up to the first week in June and from the first day of October. Particular and tidy housekeepers, by arranging their fireplaces for the summer too early, oftentimes put the whole family to a serious discomfort, and endanger health by exposing them to sit in chilliness for several hours every morning, waiting for the weather to moderate, rather than have the fireplace or grate blackened; that is, rather than be put to the trouble of another arranging for the summer, they expose the children to croup and the old folks to inflammation on the lungs. The old and the young delight in warmth; it is to them the greatest luxury. Half the diseases of humanity would be swept from existence if the human body were kept comfortably warm all the time. The discomfort of cold feet, or of a chilly room, many have experienced to their sorrow; they make the mind peevish and fretful, while they expose the body to colds and inflammations which often destroy it in less than a week.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD MEAT.—Dr. Letheby, who has had great special experience during several years in the city of London, describes the following as the characteristics of good meat:—1. It is neither of a pale pink colour, nor of a deep purple tint; for the former is a sign of disease, and the latter indicates that the animal has not been slaughtered, but has died with the blood in it, or has suffered from acute fever. 2. It has a marble appearance from the ramifications of little veins of fat among the muscles. 3. It should be firm and elastic to the touch, and should scarcely moisten the fingers—bad meat being wet, and sodden, and flabby, with the fat looking like jelly or wet parchment. 4. It should have little or no odour, and the odour should not be disagreeable; for diseased meat has a sickly cadaverous smell, and sometimes a smell of physic. This is very discoverable when the meat is chopped up and drenched with warm water. 5. It should not shrink or waste much in cooking. 6. It should not run to water, or become very wet on standing for a day or so, but should, on the contrary, dry upon the surface. 7. When dried at a temperature of 212 deg. or thereabouts, it should not lose more than from 70 to 74 per cent. of its weight, whereas bad meat will often lose as much as 80 per cent. Other properties of a more refined character will also serve for the recognition of bad meat, as, that the juice of the flesh is alkaline or neutral to test-paper, instead of being distinctly acid; and the muscular fibre, when examined under the microscope is found to be sodden and ill defined.

WOMEN'S WAGES IN THE UNITED STATES.—In Portland, Maine, women are making clothing for New York houses at the following rates:—Woollen sack coats, 1s. 0½d. each; pantaloons, 6½d. to 9d.; ordinary overcoats, 1s. 8d.; and for the heaviest and best made, 2s. 6d. to 3s. 1d.

AN "ENOCH ARDEN" CASE IN PORT-GLASGOW.—In the year 1864, a painter belonging to Port-Glasgow

left that town and joined the American army. From time to time, for twelve months thereafter, word was regularly received from him, the last word being that he was promoted to be a sergeant in the Union army. About two months after that letter was received another came to his wife in Port-Glasgow, stating that her husband, the sergeant, was no more, having been shot in one of the battles in which General Lee was the opposing commander. His widow, his father, mother, brothers, and sisters mourned for him as dead, and donned the usual habiliments for twelve months. After that his supposed widow was married, and with her second husband lived happily until, to her surprise, a few days since, her former husband arrived at Port-Glasgow, all alive, and in excellent health. The wife refuses to leave her second spouse, while the first threatens to take legal proceedings to compel her to share his bed and board. How the matter may end it is premature to conjecture. Meanwhile the gossips of Port-Glasgow are busy discussing the matter. The first husband has been to Greenock, consulting a legal gentleman as to the course he ought to pursue.

ONLY A WOMAN'S HAIR.

ONLY a woman's hair,
A silken braid from a fond woman's tresses;
Only an old despair,
A mute, sad token of dead love-caresses.

Only a linked thought
Recalling all my tender recollection.
To all the world 'tis naught,
But all the world to me in fond affection.

Only remorse in vain—
Medusa-coils which writhe in snaky liases,
And sting and scorch my brain,
When they recall false vows and perjured kisses.

Oh, severed links of hair!
Like novice's tresses when her vows are taken,
A pledge these ringlets were,
A heart for Love had all this world forsaken.

Long, long ago, fair hands
Smoothed back these shiny braids with trembling
fingers,
And trained the clustering bands
To please her lover—wondering why she lingers.

Oft wished she in those days
When by the mirror she stood—blushing—loving,
And wreathed the scented sprays,
She were more fair to win his fond approving.

Ne'er dreaming he could prove
Cold, heartless as her shadow in the mirror;
And blame and scorn her love,
Harsh as the worldling mocks a woman's error.

Her other locks have grown
White in the winter grief which scathed her passion,
And I am all alone
And sneer at all things in my fiendish fashion.

As when of old, men hurled
Their darts from bows strung with fair maidens'
tresses,
So wreak I on the world
My fierce remorse for bygone tendernesses.

The one sole thing that's fair,
Or pure, or good, within this dwelling lonely,
Is but a braid of hair,
A long, soft link of woman's tresses only!

Perhaps when I am dead,
And strangers gaze upon this soiled love token,
It may be gently said,
This cynic had a heart once and 'twas broken.

J. J. L.

GEMS.

A MAN may travel through the world, and sow it thick with friendship.

TRUE quietness of heart is got by resisting our passions, not by obeying them.

WE sleep, but the loom of life never stops; and the pattern which was weaving when the sun went down is weaving when it comes up to-morrow.

MEN often talk of the humbleness of their origin when they are really ashamed of it, though vain of the talent that enabled them to emerge from it.

THOSE who seem most indifferent to us in our joy may prove the warmest friends in our sorrow. The springs that are coldest in summer never freeze in winter.

"WHEN a stranger treats me with want of respect," said a poor philosopher, "I comfort myself with the reflection that it is not myself that he slighted, but my old and shabby coat and shabby hat, which, to sav truth, have no particular claim to adoration."

So if my hat and coat choose to fret about it, let them but it is nothing to me."

PLEASURES OF THE WORLD.—The pleasures of the world are deceitful; they promise more than they give. They trouble us in seeking them, and they do not satisfy us when possessing them.

AN ODD SCENE.

A PARIS correspondent thus describes an odd scene which he says took place lately at a theatre in the environs of Lyons:

A worthy blacksmith occupied the first seat in the pit, and seemed to be absorbed by the incidents of the drama until the leading juvenile made his appearance, whereupon the excellent spectator leaped on the stage and gave the "leading juvenile" a sound thrashing, which the latter bore with exemplary resignation.

The police rushed forward and soon obtained the explanation of the strange proceeding.

The blacksmith told him that he, the "leading juvenile," was his son, whom he believed to be at Paris pursuing his studies, and who drew regularly every month on him for his board, tuition fees, and book bill. He excused himself for his impetuosity, but confessed that he could not command himself. The blacksmith agreed to allow the proceedings to continue, and he resumed his seat; but when he shook his fist at the "leading juvenile," and called him rogue, knave, whenever he appeared, the laughter in the house destroyed all the effect of the drama. After the curtain fell he collared the "leading juvenile" and carried him home.

MISCELLANEOUS.

ON the Derby day a carrier pigeon flew from the downs to Kensington Road, London, in 17 minutes.

A STATUE of Handel has lately been erected at Hamburgh.

TWO clergymen were among the judges of sporting dogs at the great dog show.

GENERAL TOM THUMB is building a fine residence at Middleborough, Connecticut.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE is being prepared for the Viceroy's accommodation.

THE 27th of next July is the day fixed for the marriage of the Crown Prince of Denmark with the Crown Princess of Sweden.

It is coolly suggested that the beasts in the Zoological Gardens shall have a paddock to run in, on the ground that confinement is injurious. Walking in the Zoo will then be at a discount.

A CABLE telegram announces that a great battle had been fought in Texas, near Fort Griffin, between the United States troops and the Indians, in which the latter were defeated with considerable loss.

THE final report of the Clorkenwell Explosion Relief Fund shows that the total receipts were 10,073l. 14s. 2d., and the whole, with the exception of 200l. has been expended.

It has been observed by several French botanists that all the large healthy trees of the woods of Ville d'Avray and St. Cloud are, in the immense majority of cases, thicker in the direction from east to west than in the contrary one.

THE iron-clad corvette Belliqueuse has returned to Brest from a voyage round the world. This is the first vessel of this description which has performed so long a voyage. The Belliqueuse has sustained no damage.

SIR EDWIN LANDSEER has sold his great work in the Academy—the "Swannery invaded by Sea Eagles"—to the Marquis of Northampton, for four thousand guineas; Mr. Millais's portrait of "Venus" has found a purchaser at 700l.

HER MAJESTY is expected to visit the Duchess Dowager of Athole at Dunkeld House in September next. It is now four years since the Queen visited Dunkeld, which she then did to take farewell of the late Duke of Athole, during his last illness.

WELLS CATHEDRAL RESTORATION.—The subscriptions paid or promised amount to 5,006l. 19s. The estimated expense is about 7,000l. A short time since, during a violent gale of wind, a considerable portion of one of the canopies over the statues at the north-west corner was blown down, and the whole of the arch seems likely to follow.

IMPORTANT INTELLIGENCE (?)—The Master of Marybone Workhouse reported that, on a recent occasion, a casual named Louis Napoleon was sentenced to twenty-one days' imprisonment with hard labour, for tearing up his clothes. The announcement caused some amusement and laughter at the board of guardians.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

J. M.—Declined with thanks.

W. J. S.—The word should be pronounced as it is spelled—the latter is vulgar.

E. M. A.—No. 2 specimen is the best—but there is great room for improvement.

A. ATKINS.—You are not at liberty to do so either at your own residence or any other place.

E. K.—The creditors can proceed against you at once, without any County Court summons.

L. Q.—You will get every information at the Horse Guards, or from any recruiting sergeant.

J. R. B.—The ceremony ought to be performed in both churches to make it legal.

JOSEPHUS.—Fresh air and exercise is what you require. Give over taking quick medicines.

TALBOT.—The story of Reineke the Fox is by Goethe. The German pronunciation is "Reineke Fuchs."

BESSIE L.—Side-saddles for ladies were introduced by Anne, Queen of Richard II, in 1388.

E. B.—The ingredients are spirit and mercury; but it is impossible for an amateur to make a proper barometer or thermometer.

LILY.—Try lime-juice and glycerine. You can get it at any chemist's. You will find your hair improve by the application.

PERPLEXED EMMA.—The marriage having been contracted in the name your husband has been known by for some years is legal, unless the irregularity was resorted to for the purpose of fraud.

B. R. Q. Z.—1. We cannot recommend anything. 2. We would not advise a clerk of nineteen to proceed to Australia, married or single. Business in that colony at the present time is not in a flourishing condition.

AKKWEIGHT.—1. As the money was left entirely under the wife's control, she can act independently of her husband in the matter, with this exception, that his signature must also be attached to the document. 2. Yes. 3. Handwriting scarcely up to the mark for a clerk.

A YOUNG MOTHER.—Certainly you were wrong. You should never attempt to govern children by such foolish threats. Firmness should be united with gentleness, and your children will obey you through love and not fear. Your present system only tends to harden them.

VINTNER.—1. Porter obtained its appellation on account of its having been drunk by porters in the city of London, about 1730. 2. The number of licensed brewers in 1850 in England, was 2,257; in Scotland, 154; and in Ireland, 96.

JANE S.—You must attend to the small courtesies of life. A person may have virtue, capacity and good conduct, and yet be insupportable. The manners which are neglected as small things are often those which decide men and women for or against you, and a slight attention to them would have prevented their mean opinion of you.

HONEYMOON.—Your husband is the proper confidant. However painful it may be to your feelings that your brother is such a scapegrace, still it reflects no disgrace upon you. On the contrary you deserve praise for what you have done. From your husband's position, we fancy another chance might be given to the young man. At all events lay the facts before him.

ELAINE.—Jealousy is indeed a demon, and when once it enters the human heart there can be neither peace nor happiness. Avoid all such feelings if you would wish to prevent life-long misery to others as well as to yourself. Like a volcano, it burns and shrivels the heart, reckless of what is to come, and often ends in the direst social calamities. Love, religion, everything succumbs to its baneful influence.

MARION.—Do not despair. Take up the thistle before it has taken root too deeply. Where there is not a malicious love of mischief in the heart, which we trust is very seldom, we speak evil because we have always done so, and because we have always heard it done. Let the young be watchful against the habit, and resist the example. To assist them in this the first thing is to induce a habit of thinking of others as well as they can, for those who think no evil will say none. You hear something you are disposed to blame; but you may have misconstrued the words—the speaker may have used stronger expressions than he was aware of—he may have regretted them as soon as spoken. Accustom yourself to such reflections as these. You see, or are told of an action of which you disapprove; perhaps there was some reason for it, no one knows—some temptation that at least extenuates it—some mistake that led to it. Try to believe so. You are

shocked by defects and vices of character in others. Say to yourself, ere you condemn, some neglect of education, some bad example, some physical disorder, or mental incapacity may have caused all this. In such a frame of mind you will be in no hurry to speak the worst while you are thus endeavouring to think the best.

PROTHUS.—All depends upon the nature of the entertainment. There are not many things of which the "hewers of wood and drawers of water" stand in greater need than distraction from their daily toil by means of amusement of a sound and rational character. As a wholesome stimulant to the intellect, narrowed by constant contemplation of monotonous surroundings: as an incentive to increased exertion in the business of life, cheap and healthy entertainment is much to be desired.

G. L. S.—Metempsychosis is a doctrine attributed to Pythagoras, 528 B.C. It supposes the transmigration of the soul from one body to another. It is also ascribed to the Egyptians, who would not eat animal food lest they should devour the body into which the soul of a deceased relative or friend had passed. They had also an idea that so long as the body of the deceased was entire the soul would not transmigrate, and therefore embalmed the dead.

IGNERIA.—In its original state, Rome was but a small castle on the summit of Mount Palatine; and the founder, to give his followers the appearance of a nation or a barbarian horde, was obliged to erect a standard as a common asylum for criminals, debtors, or murderers, who fled from their native country to avoid the punishment which attended them. From such an assemblage a numerous body was soon collected, and before the death of the founder, the Romans had covered with their habitations the Palatine, Capitoline, Aventine, and Esquiline hills.

EIGHTEEN.

All the earth is glad, and the sky is clear,
But my heart is wild, and I feel so queer;
O'er a brave young heart I'll be wife and queen,
In the life and romance of merry eighteen;
I could not ask him for shame, do you see,
And I was afraid he would never ask me;
Adieu to all doubt, farewell to all sorrow,
He has asked, and I'll be his wife to-morrow!

My mother comes in, very pleased, to be sure,
And says: "My dear Nelly, look prim and demure!"
But how can my face say, "My grandmother's dead,"
While the guests of the wedding dance in my head?
What thought mamma, "neath the lilywren so shady,
When papa fell a-kissing a bonny young lady?"
Did she look demure through the tears of her sorrow,
And weep "Lack-a-day, I'll be wedded to-morrow!"

My foot beat a tune in their slippers of soy,
My heart palpitates for a yellow-haired boy;
My soul is in rapture, my frame in a quiver,
My lips keep repeating for ever and ever:
"Oh, would the morn come, would the even were sped,
Oh, would the day dawn—oh, would I were wed!"
But flies away dawn, and flies away sorrow,
Away from a girl who'll be wedded to-morrow!

W. S. B.

MINISTER'S DAUGHTER.—You are right. When we look abroad over the vast universe, we everywhere see proofs of the wisdom and providence of the Creator; from the worm that crawls along the garden walk to the stately lion that startles the forest with its roar; from the humble daisy that grows by the wayside to the tall palm tree that cheers the thirsty traveller in the sandy deserts of Africa with its fruit; everything in nature, in fact, shows the feebleness of even the greatest attempts of man compared with Divinity.

PHILIP B.—You are deficient in moral courage. Nothing can be so fatal to success in life and to the happiness of a young man as weakness and irresolution. It should not be difficult to say "no" when you are convinced that the negative reply is the only one consistent with your dignity. You say you are afraid of losing your friends if you stick to your own views in certain matters. The term is a misnomer, if they are sundered so easily; in your present frame of mind your greatest enemy is yourself. Be not rash in forming a judgment; but having once made up your mind, let nothing swerve you from your purpose.

GEORGE.—We cannot sympathize with you in life. There is nothing productive of so much misery in life as that misanthropic brooding over imaginary wrongs. Your parents be assured, are as much interested in your welfare and happiness as in that of your brothers. You complain that the young lady visitors avoid your company in favour of Charley and Robert. It is not to be wondered at if you go about with a scowling, melancholy aspect, as if the world was in a conspiracy against you. To speak plainly, the feeling is made up a great deal of conceit, and you must shake it off, or it will increase, and bring with it a long list of evils in its train—a joyless manhood, and a miserable old age.

W. W.—You must, in a few weeks, begin to guard against the ravages of the moth. It is a pretty, yet formidable enemy in a house. In all woollen manufactures, blankets, flannels, moreen curtains, carpets, as well as in furs, and amidst feathers, it seeks to form its nest and to deposit its eggs; whence in the spring of the year issue the larvae, which derive nourishment from such substances. In this stage of the insect's existence the ruin takes place of the fabric upon which it feeds. This is visible in the innumerable small circular holes through which it has eaten, and which, destroying the strength and tenacity of the material, render it worthless. Many persons suppose that moths are produced in clothes that are laid by, merely by their being shut up in closed places; but this is an error. None of the little larvae or caterpillars of the moth, that really do the mischief, ever appear among clothes or articles of any kind, provided some of the winged moths can have access to them to lay their eggs there. The winged moth, that flies about in the dark, does not, cannot eat or destroy cloth of any kind; but lays its eggs in woollen articles, upon which alone nature dictates to her that her young must feed. These eggs in time produce little caterpillars, and it is they that eat holes in and destroy clothes, &c. After a time

these caterpillars assume the pupa state, out of which burst forth the winged insects, to procreate, as before described, in laying eggs.

ALEXIS.—More learning will never carry you safely and happily through life. The learned man is only useful to the learned; the wise man is equally useful to the wise and the simple. The merely learned man has not elevated his mind above that of any others; his judgments are not more penetrating, his remarks not more delicate, nor his actions more beautiful than those of others; he merely uses other instruments than his own; his hands are employed in business of which the head sometimes takes little note. It is wholly different with the wise man; he moves far above the common level; he observes everything from a different point of view; in his employments there is always an aim; in his views, always freedom; and all connected with them is above the common level.

T. M.—When the Spaniards, under their leader, Cortez, conquered Mexico in 1521, they observed a peculiar kind of beverage in high esteem among the natives, who drank it at their daily repast and their sumptuous festivals, and called it *chacao-oli*. From this Mexican term our word chocolate is derived. The Spaniards soon after first brought it to Europe, and for a time kept the knowledge of it secret. But, as must always be the case when commerce can by any possibility get to take care of itself, the new product soon found its way from Spain into other countries. In this country the tree may be seen in the conservatories of those who cultivate rare specimens of foreign plants. The tree of this species grows from twelve to sixteen feet high, with a slender, straight trunk, and bright evergreen leaves. The branches begin to spread out at about five feet from the ground, and are covered with leaves, flowers, and fruit at the same time all the year round.

ANNIE S.—Gas in bed-rooms is injurious to the health, as it creates carbonic acid gas. We give you a few hints on the subject of ventilation of rooms: First, the upper part of a room (supposing it to be badly ventilated, or not ventilated at all) is always filled with foul air, which keeps on increasing until it is breathed by persons who are in the room, to the prejudice of their health; second, the openings for the escape of this foul air must be made as near the ceiling as possible; third, fresh air finds its way into a room at the lower part; and if openings for ventilation are made in the upper part, a stream of air for breathing is always passing through the room; fourth, by opening windows and doors, the air of a room may be purified as many times a day as may be desired. Now this last suggestion is one which even the poorest person may adopt; and while so ready a method of ventilation may be practised, while such a cheap means of promoting health offers itself to everyone, we trust that none will neglect it.

J. T. W., twenty-one, 5 ft. 8 in., dark hair, and eyes. EMMA E., twenty, rather tall, dark, fond of music, domesticated, and amiable.

LILLY, twenty, tall, fair, blue eyes, light hair, and has 300l. Respondent must be tall and good looking; a tradesman preferred.

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